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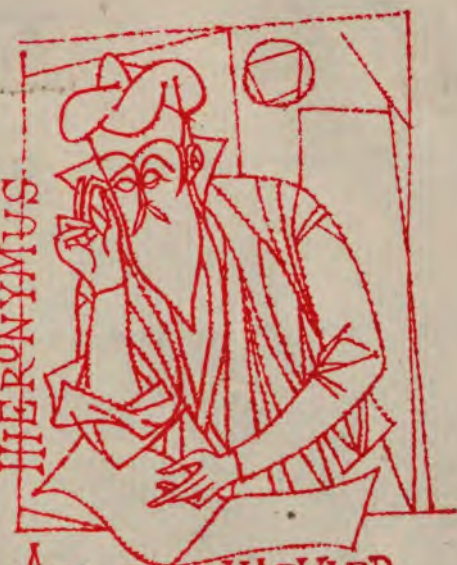
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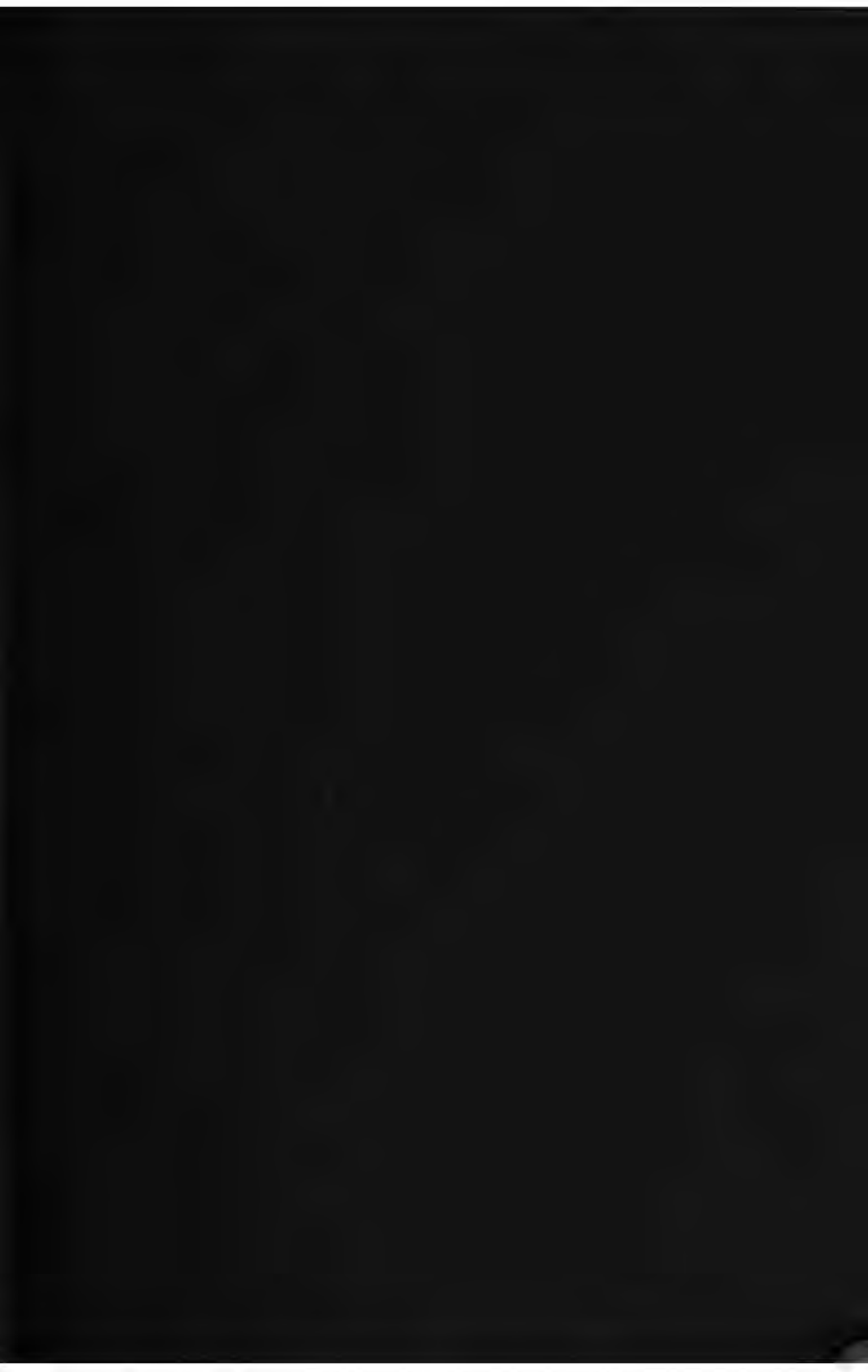
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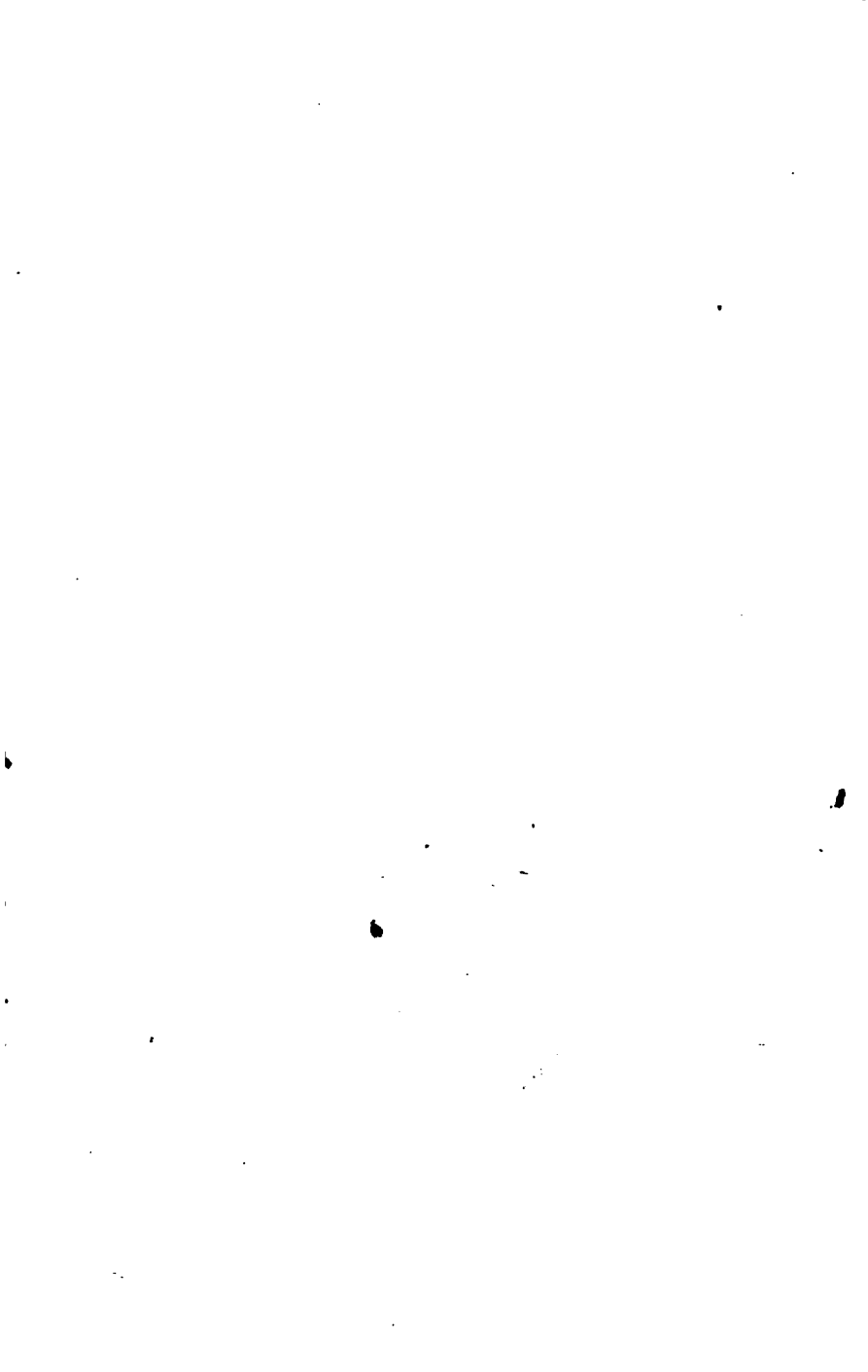


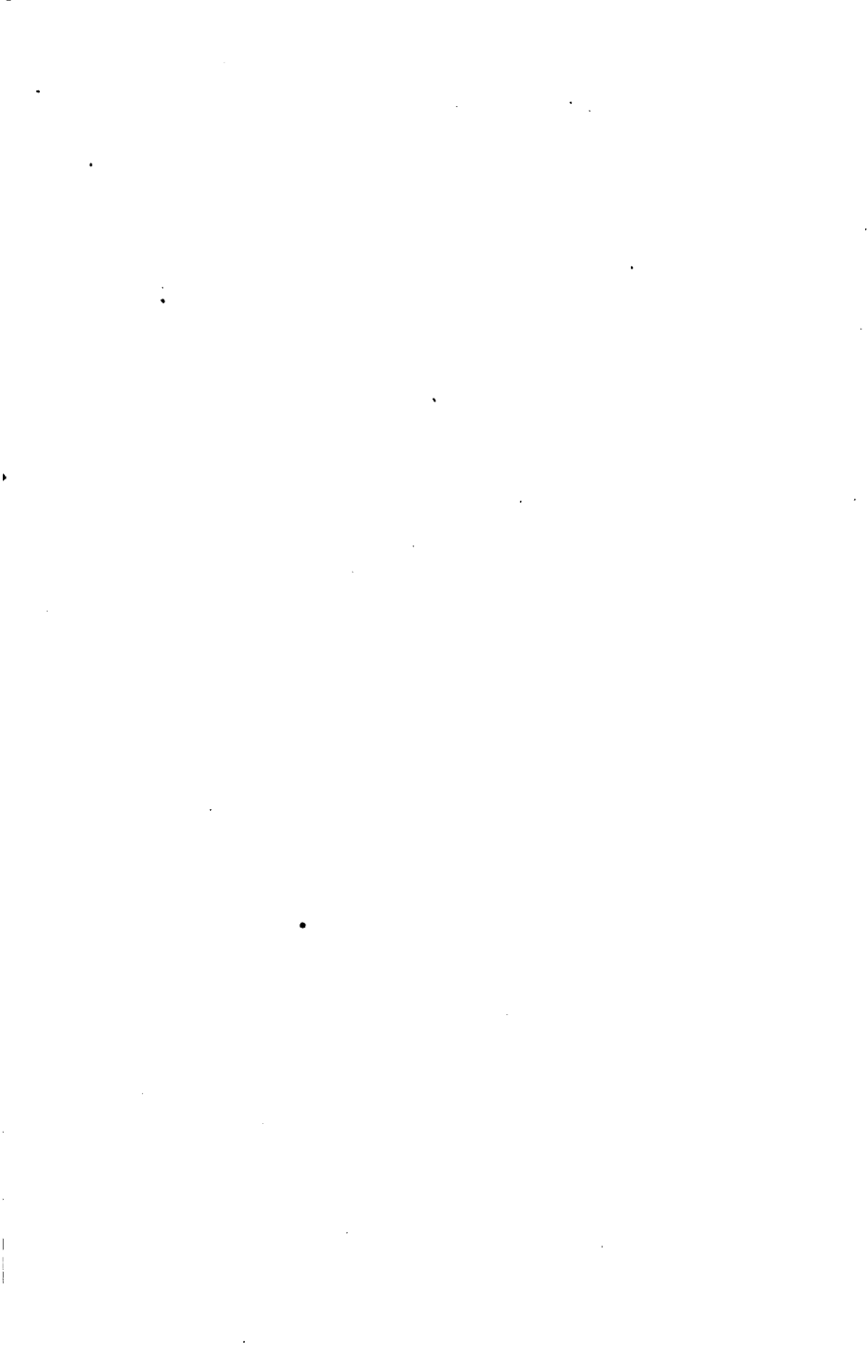
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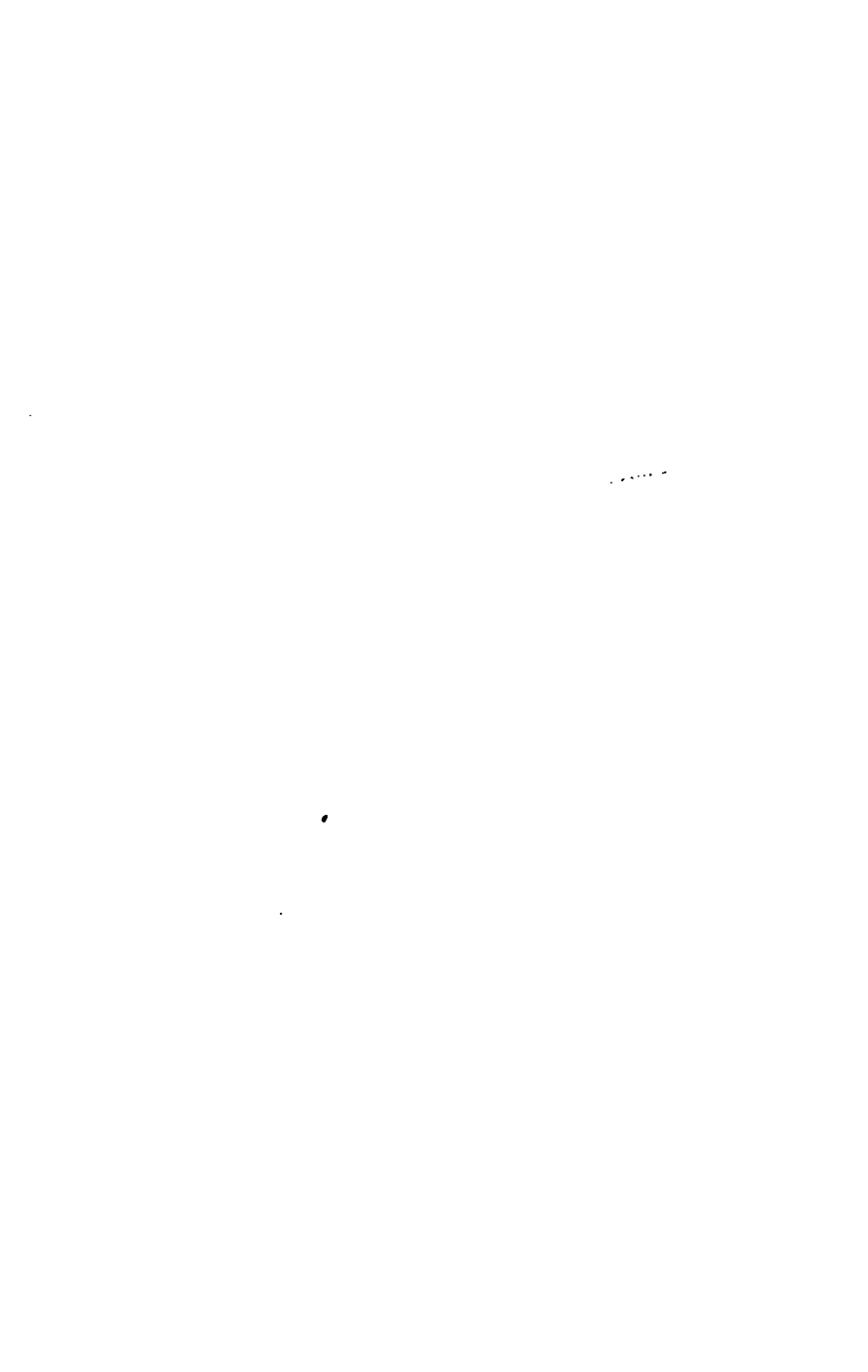
Luth. Hist. Socy

presented by

Rev. Dr. Goswold









Thieves of Homes;

—OR—

HABITS THAT IMPOVERISH.

—BY—

John
REV. J. M. ANSPACH,
PASTOR OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH, EASTON, PA.

EASTON, PA.:
CHAS. A. HILBURN.

1881.



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WITH

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TO THE

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OF

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PREFACE.

The contents of this small volume, with the exception of two chapters, more secular than the others, were pronounced during the spring just past, in the shape of lectures, before the congregation to whom the author has the privilege and pleasure of ministering in holy things. By a goodly number of persons belonging to, as also by several educated and christian gentlemen not in connection with his church, who came regularly to hear them, their publication in book form, was, without conference or solicitation, suggested and advised. The reason, was that usually given for the public presentation of writings of like character—"they are calculated to do good." It is in deference to the wish so expressed, and in the earnest hope of some such result, that they are herewith submitted. If under God, who in the early

days of christianity chose "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which were mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which were despised, and things which were not, to bring to nought things that were," who still chooses, if in measure less extensive and wonderful, yet not less certain, to accomplish through humblest instrumentalities, results most precious, these simple lines are made efficacious in delivering any individual from the power of the habits designated ; persons who have already fallen in greater or less degree into their control ; or of saving others yet free of, from ever coming under their dominion ; or if to any soul interested in the work of social reform and laboring in any field or capacity for the prevalence of healthful and correct sentiment on various topics of life and morals, they shall impart any comfort or encouragement, render patient under less than expected success and stimulate further effort ; if they shall contribute, in whole or in part to such result, he, who has written them and now commends them to the press, will be content and most happy.

Seeking no intrusion beyond a limited sphere, and recognition mainly among the humbler classes ; making no pretensions specially to either elegance or ability, may not the hope of lenient judgment and opinion, with reference to this work, be entertained.

J. M. ANSPACH.

Easton, Pa., July, 1881.

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THIEVES OF HOMES.

INTRODUCTION.

“There is a thief in your house!” If we were to meet any of you who own homes, or belong to homes, on the street, or were to come to you in your places of worship, business or pleasure, and make such an announcement as this, we would throw you at once into a state of excitement and cause you, wherever you might be, or however occupied, to proceed as rapidly as possible to your residence. Nothing that we could communicate, unless the intelligence of the death of some esteemed one, or of a calamity, that equally with it involved your comfort, would as completely divert your mind from any and everything with which engaged. And this because of what is known to be the habit of thieves—to take what is most valuable—what by dint of industry and economy has been saved—what affords satisfaction, and what taken, puts to greatest inconvenience.

The poor and the rich alike stand in dread of thieves and take precaution against their depredations. Even thieves themselves want to keep clear of, and be protected against, other thieves.

NOT PROBABLE IN POINT OF FACT.

We cannot, however, make any such declaration as the above. Not at least in the sense in which you would understand it. It is not likely that at this moment any human plunderer is within your doors. To be sure it would not be an impossible matter, still it is hardly probable—so great are the chances of your goods being in an unmolested state. And yet there is a sense in which we are justified in making of many homes such assertion as this—"There is a thief in your house!" Even with respect to homes whose entrances are well secured, whose inmates are guilty of nothing which the law brands as dishonest.

A THIEF DEFINED.

For what is a thief? Not as defined in the civil statutes and as held by the exponents and defenders of these. Not even in the strictest meaning which lexicographers attach to the term, but a thief substantially, a thief to all intents and purposes. May not anyone, may not anything, be thus denominated, that coaxingly, delusively, its true nature not understood, gets from us against our better judgment and really contrary to our will when free to exercise it, our possessions? What does it matter when robbed as to how or by whom the deed was done. In the daylight or in the darkness, by forci-

ble entry or entry without force, by a fellow countryman or a foreigner, by a tall or a short thief, one well dressed and handsome, or poorly clad and homely. How much time do we spend on such points, robbery perpetrated? A knowledge of these particulars may assist in discovery, but does not alter or modify the result. If it is a thousand dollars that has been lost, it is a thousand still, whether you know these things or not. And if instead of a human being, an associate or an enemy, it is a *habit*, a fair seeming and apparently not dangerous habit, that gets out of or away from us our possessions, without any equivalent in return, is it not a thief nevertheless? The loss may be less sudden but is not less sure. The change in ownership may not be so quick, but is just as certain, and the inconvenience imposed or want incurred as great. And besides, occasioned in this latter way, it may be less retrievable. Yea, we claim that any way of man, any custom to which addicted, that empties the meal out of the barrel and scatters it upon the street—that takes the carpets from the floors and does not replace them—that reduces the wardrobe to the barest supplies and goes on reducing—that puts watch and ring and prized memento of other character into the shop of the pawn-broker—that wastes the savings of years however held, or the earnings of daily toil—that in short reduces affluence to stringency, plenty to penury, adequacy to insufficiency, we claim that any practice so resulting is a thief in a sense most just and emphatic, and it matters not how smilingly it may address itself

to us, or what arguments it may advance for countenance, patronage or support.

AS DEFINED, TRUE OF MANY HOMES.

Thus understood we are prepared to announce most fervently and sincerely, that there is a thief, that there are thieves in countless homes into which no human depredator has made his way. In the various towns and cities of our land, not one town or one city, but all towns and all cities, neither of this land only, but of all lands, are abodes thus infected. The evidence of their presence is the absence of the essentials in order to a real home. Little or nothing on the table ; little or nothing in pantry, cellar or larder ; little or nothing over the nakedness of occupants ; scanty furniture ; uninviting beds ; in many instances filthy floors and doors, and windows with broken panes. There may be homes with some of these features where no thieves are lodged ; homes where want abounds, caused by a poverty that widowhood, sickness in person or family renders unavoidable, but few, if any, with all of them, where one or more thieves are not allowed to do their work. In other words there are abodes of squalidness, misery and destitution that would not be ; hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of such, but for the presence in them of moral thieves. Abodes, that if these were ejected from them, would experience a transformation literally amazing—as marked or decided, as complete and radical as that which spring and summer give to earth. There would be brightness for cheerlessness, bounteousness for bar-

renness, cleanliness for filthiness, refinement for roughness, purity of speech instead of profanity, joyousness for sadness. In brief, what partakes of paradise, would have the place of what suggests perdition.

OBJECT OF THIS BOOK.

In the following chapters we propose designating the thieves referred to, as well as the character of robbery aimed at and consummated by them. And this, with the double hope of inducing their expulsion from some homes at least they have long infested, and of putting others upon their guard, young persons especially, who have not as yet suffered from their ravages and yet are sure to do so, if any countenance or toleration is shown them. Prompted to this matter by such motive, we trust for patient and careful hearing. Nor let anyone refuse it on the assumed ground of his domicile being free from any such intrusion; anyone particularly with whom life has been a sore struggle; who has found it difficult to provide properly for himself and dependent ones; whose home comforts are scarce; who from inability to advance his position or increase his means, has wearied in life's race again and again and becoming disheartened has felt at times like ceasing effort. Possibly we may point out a thief whose presence you do not suspect—a thief that seems a friend—yet is a thief none the less, and which, if ejected, will enable you to improve your estate and make your earthly lot more pleasant and desirable than it is. You know that a comparatively small leak leaves out of a liquid receptacle its

contents. A leak that fails to sink a vessel may still prevent a speedy and prosperous voyage over the seas. Something in effect like this to which your eyes may be holden, for want of careful, scrutinizing survey and examination may let out of the treasures you gather and earn even to indigence, and keep your bark of existence unprogressive, vainly struggling to get onward on the ocean of life.

And may God, the bounteous author of all goodness, whom we cannot other than believe, means a sufficiency of temporal benefits to every man, as teeming field, prolific orchard and garden, fruitful herd and flock and abounding waters attest—whose fault it surely is not that destitution in so many forms obtains among men—the sum of his provisions being far, far in excess of the aggregate of all human wants, may He grant His help in this undertaking and aid in the expulsion from our homes of any and every thief, habit or occasion of want, distress, sorrow and death, that careful, earnest search may to us discover.





I.

ALCOHOL.

THIS is the first thief to which we shall refer. In all the gang, the very greatest likewise, we shall specify. Varied and wonderful are his depredations. Not limited to any line of valuables. Not confined to any neighborhood or locality. As with a notorious human thief who is known as Jones, alias Brown, alias Green, alias Dick Smith, so he has various names, titles and aliases. He is called Whiskey, Brandy, Rum, Gin, Old Port, and thus on, according as he may be differently dressed or set up, but he is the same fellow when you come down to a close investigation, though showing a little difference in power as he moves under these different designations. He has children, who, partaking of his spirit, are occupied in the same way. They are known as sparkling Champagne, foaming Lager, Ale and Porter. Their work is more mildly done; not usually so quickly and fearfully consummated; but being an associate work, a partnership business under the firm head of Alcohol, the end finally wrought out is the same. And what these help him do, he is said to do and rightly, as uninspired by him their work would be harmless. Having these various confederates in his

employ and with them aiming to deprive all persons he can of everything precious they have, he may indeed be considered a great thief.

DIRECT PECUNIARY ABSTRACTIONS.

He takes money. Immense sums of it. Number the saloons in any place in the land, save the few places where prohibitory measures are in force. Count the cost at which each one of them is maintained, and you may form a tolerably correct idea of the means he extorts from the public. In a town of ten thousand inhabitants you find from thirty to forty places where his thieving operations are carried on. Now estimate the average amount annually taken at each of these places at two thousand dollars, which from the rent that is usually paid and the hands employed in the larger of these establishments, we judge rather under than above the true receipts, and we have the sum of sixty to eighty thousand dollars yearly extorted by Alcohol, which divided by the number of population makes from six to eight dollars for every man, woman and child in the community. Or look at it in another way. Take the individual that has put himself in the power of this thief. Every day or nearly so he has abstracted from him a certain sum. This of course varies as means are possessed, opportunities afforded, and the power of the despoiler felt. There may be those who escape with the loss of a solitary dime—there are those who come off with no less than a dollar—while the masses are relieved of from thirty to sixty cents daily. In our early ministry we met a

mechanic, whose wages at steady employment were one dollar and seventy-five cents per day. Immoral and intemperate for a long time, he at last under God found renewal in Christ and freedom from strong drink. Then he confessed to us that for years he spent eighty cents a day to gratify his thirst for spirituous drinks. Drinking at regular intervals, as his work in an iron mill allowed him to slip away to a saloon, he avoided with it all, intoxication. Does he stand alone among the masses, none or very few like him, or is he only one of a great multitude? In different places we have visited, men have been pointed out to us by acquaintances of theirs, who knew their habits, with such remarks as these: "that man drinks a dollar's worth of whiskey a day;" "there goes a man who takes three drams before breakfast, as many after tea, and double the quantity between these meals." Now reckon this sum for a year and see to what it amounts then multiply it by the number from whom extracted or by whom expended, and we have a total that is literally enormous. A total extorted, stolen, we say, because for it no equivalent in any shape has been given—nothing that in any wise profiteth.

INDIRECT, THROUGH CRIME, PAUPERISM AND IDLENESS

IT INDUCES.

But this is not the only way in which he takes money. A vast amount of crime is occasioned by him. We are aware of this. The bulk of civil misdemeanors that have fallen under our observation have had their existence from Alcohol as cause. The sober people are the

well behaved. Our murderers, our burglars, our incendiaries, our rioters, our disturbers of the peace, with few exceptions, are from the class given to spirituous indulgence. A pious English jurist, who for nearly twenty years sat upon the bench, gave it as his conviction after careful examination and inquiry, that four-fifths of all the cases that came before him, and these the worst known to the kingdom, were induced by strong drink. We have seen nothing in our courts of justice to make us doubt this statement. It is a fact borne out by figures not only in this land but on the continent of Europe, that crime of all sorts, falls and rises, increases or diminishes with the sale of intoxicating mixtures. Now look at the cost at which criminal doings are adjusted. Cost to community; cost to the individuals perpetrating them; to those effected by them; to witnesses who testify upon them, their wages in countless cases being no proportion to their earnings in regular occupation or pursuit. And if to this be added the pauperism that crime connects with itself, and the orphanage and dementia or insanity which it makes, largely supported at the public expense, we have figures again reaching in this land alone, beyond five hundred millions of dollars, a sum of which the majority of persons have no proper conception. And mark, this result is not for a period of five or ten years, but annually.

Nor are these the only ways in which he abstracts money. Those he victimizes waste much time in idleness. Days and weeks together, disqualified for work

by him, they lounge at home, or around street corners, or in saloons, every such day to them being of a money value of from seventy cents to two dollars. Plenty of men who have fallen into the clutches of alcohol, lose forty, fifty and sixty days in a year through the unfitness for labor he induces. Now reckon the silver and golden worth of that time and behold what a sum we have for one year! What a sum for ten! What an amount for one individual! What an amount for all who are thus under his power! Add to this the sums that are expended for remedies to relieve of the bad effects of rum, to prevent diseases it threatens or cure indisposition it has brought on, and we have a total again specified by no small number. All the revenue which he pays into the public treasury for the privilege of doing his desolating work, to which his friends sometimes refer as a sort of excuse for, or palliation of, his horrid work, or for the purpose of brightening slightly the dark, dark picture, or possibly quieting their convictions of his public robbery, does not begin to equal what is taken by him in this last and smallest way alone.

STEALS COMFORT.

Taking money he takes comfort. All the comfort that as much money as he secures could provide, for he gives no comfort. Take the case of the man to whom we referred as expending eighty cents a day for drink. What comfort that would purchase in the way of clothing; in the way of books; in the way of social advantages; in the way of handsome furniture. In ten years in such a

place as we knew him it would provide a neat and commodious residence, well furnished in all its apartments. Take the case of him who spends a dollar a day in this fashion, or of him who spends but a dime or two, and what pleasure of profitable kind, what literary convenience, what article of domestic use or wear, saving to strength or muscle, or aiding to easier livelihood it would purchase. Many a poor woman could own a sewing machine, that would be an immense convenience to her and a help to earning something for herself and family, if she had a tithe of what her husband squanders for drink. Many a daughter of humble birth could for the same amount own a musical instrument and secure the services of a skillful master, and thus have high immediate enjoyment and be put in the way of reaching a most comfortable station in life. Many a mechanic given to this habit, could for the same amount provide himself extra tools, and so occupy hours (when at his regular trade he can find no employment,) in making valuable articles of a kind, like or akin to his trade. There is no naming the comforts, luxuries even, that could be put in homes, destitute almost of necessities, if the masters of them would take the money of which alcohol deprives them and thus invest it. Now take the average six or eight dollars to every inhabitant of our good sized towns and cities annually squandered for drink and what wretchedness they would remedy. Ah ! how little misery comparatively there is, that is not the consequence of the heavy revenues he extorts. When

you pass through the courts and alleys of well populated places and observe the misery that there reigns in power ; eyes and cheeks sunken for want of food, children dying for want of adequate protection against the elements, crying for clothing or bread, women broken-hearted, not enough spirit in them to keep them decent or tidy, do you not always associate with that condition—alcohol? Drink, drink, drink is what the mind says as soon as the eyes catch the sight, and drink, drink, drink in ninety-five cases in or to an hundred is the explanation. Yes, stealing money he steals comfort. This assertion is in harmony with our individual knowledge, not only so, but with what examiners and observers everywhere testify. Years ago Oliver Goldsmith, of England, wrote : “ In all the towns and countries I have seen, I never saw a city or a village yet, whose miseries were not in proportion to the number of its public houses. In Rotterdam, you may go through eight or ten streets without finding a public house ; in Antwerp, almost every second house seems an alehouse. In the one city all wears the appearance of happiness and warm affluence ; in the other, the young fellows walk about the street in shabby finery, their fathers sit at the door darning and knitting stockings, while their ports are filled with dung-hills.” Do not the few places in our land where there is no sale of intoxicating liquors, when compared with those where the sale is free, likewise show a marked contrast with respect to wretchedness and poverty of inhabitants?

Further you will notice that his work in the particular we are now speaking of is double. That is, he not only deprives of comfort by taking the money that would provide it, but where comfort already exists, he converts it into money and secures it or takes it in exchange.

INCIDENTS.

We shall never forget a sight we witnessed when a lad. A fine looking man handsomely dressed, seated in a splendid carriage to which two impatient blooded steeds were harnessed. The sight attracted men and boys. We listened and learned that the gentleman was going away to a neighboring county to be married. He was at the time part owner of a mercantile establishment doing a large business. Subsequently we learned that his bride had had given her a parental wedding gift of ten thousand dollars. He built an elegant mansion, and furnishing it in costly style, placed her in it. There was domestic comfort of extravagant character and promise of more, for the man was sharp sighted in a business sense, ambitious and industrious. He had been a teetotaler, so we were informed, but his wife was fashionable and would have wine for dinner. It came into the house. Suspiciously viewed by the husband at first, it was shortly accorded a warm reception. Unfitness for business, idleness, speculation and bad bargains came with it. Then followed dissolution of partnership and unemployment. We will not trace the career of that man for the next twelve years, suffice it to say that in that time he had become a literal sot.

His wife had died from the effects of a cold contracted one stormy winter night while awaiting his return from a convivial feast. His property—home and household goods—had passed out of his hands, officers of the law selling it for debts made to gratify his thirst for drink. When we had attained our age we saw that man, sometime after the sale referred to, enter a room where a few articles of furniture were stored that from the sale had been saved, and taking a piece, go out and dispose of it for a trifling sum, the price of a drink or two. So afterward we found upon inquiry everything was bartered, until in the world he had nothing but the soiled garments that covered him. Only family pride that led a well to do brother to give him something to eat and a place to sleep, kept him from perishing upon the street. What has become of him, where he is and what doing, whether reformed and alive, or dead and in a drunkards grave, we know not. This however we know, that his is but a representative case. Hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of men have acted like him. To-day in this land alone he has an army of followers. Men trading for or consuming in drink all they own. We are personally acquainted with a man, a reformed drunkard, now well-to-do, who with tears in his eyes and quivering speech told us how he to gratify his thirst for rum used up the comforts of his home, which in his early married life were all that are essential to a pleasant home, consumed them until there was not a carpet on the floor, scarcely covering on the bed, or clothing upon

his wife and children, until the fire in winter went out for want of fuel to replenish it, and the children and wife went crying and hungry to bed, their food for days being dry bread and molasses and far from sufficient of this, until the health of the wife was from fasting, watching, cold and anxiety, completely and effectually broken. "Oh," he said, fairly ringing his hands, "that I should ever have so wronged what I promised to protect. The curse of rum, rum." He shook and bowed his head, feeling and thought being too deep for utterance.

Standing in the depot at Harrisburg several years ago, waiting for a train going northward, a man in middle life passed us bearing a basket containing apples, oranges, cakes, pies and so on, which he was offering for sale. A colored gentleman standing near us pointing to the man, said to a friend with whom he was conversing, "notice that man. Years ago that poor fellow owned two of the finest farms in Dauphin County, wholly unencumbered; he does not now own an acre of ground." "How came he to loose them?" "This way," said the first speaker, and rounding his one hand he raised it to his mouth and with a finger of the other hand he made upon his cheek a sound in imitation of the emptying of a bottle. We understood him to mean that he drank them up. The comfort of happy homes, of prosperous manufacturing interests, of delightful farms have been consumed by drink.

We have in our mind's eye at this moment a lawyer, whose worldly position is one of affluence and elegance.

He has his own mansion, and it is replete with what makes home attractive and charming above all places. There are paintings on the walls ; a musical instrument in the parlor and one also in the library ; there are costly volumes of standard authors in case and on table ; there are easy chairs and splendid statuary ; there is a wide green lawn in front and rear of house, and rarest flowers and choicest fruit in season ; there are servants in livery and splendid equipage ; and with these a proud and happy wife and buoyant children, all easily provided and supported by the legal income of the learned and successful attorney. We have in mind another civil practitioner, equally able when entrance upon professional life was made, living in a house mortgaged to its full value, respectably furnished but nothing more ; no ornaments, no music, no flowers, no books of consequence—the opinion gotten from a survey of the house, being one of bare subsistence—a wife whose face is often colored with shame ; children unhappy, at times afraid of their father or embarrassed by his presence ; in short a home without genuine comfort. And the one is, as *it is*, and the other as *it is*, because the master of the one is sober, and the master of the other a confirmed drunkard. In this veritable case may not alcohol be justly said to steal from the second all that the first enjoys, since but for him or it and the one would in all respects equal the other, *that being the only perceptible point of difference at the outstart and nothing in the way of means coming to the first aside from the regular revenue of the profession.* However com-

fortable your home may be young man, middle aged man, you have only to admit alcohol, and gradually or in proportion as he is countenanced will your internal comfort be imperiled. And this is attested by instances that if expressed in type and comprised in book form would fill volumes running for number into thousands.

“Two workers in one field,
Toiled on from day to day ;
Both had the same hard labor,
Both had the same small pay.
With the same blue sky above,
The same green earth below,
One soul was full of love
The other full of woe.

One leaped up with the light,
With the soaring of the lark ;
One felt it ever night,
For his soul was ever dark.
One heart was hard as stone,
One heart was ever gay ;
One worked with many a groan,
One whistled all the day.

One had a flower clad cot,
Beside a merry mill,
Wife and children near the spot,
Made it sweeter, fairer still ;
One a wretched hovel had,
Full of discord, dirt and din—
No wonder he seemed mad,
Wife and children starved within.

Still they worked in the same field,
Toiling on from day to day ;
Both had the same hard labor,
Both had the same small pay.
But they worked not with one will,
The reason let me tell,—
Lo ! the one drank at the still
And the other at the well."

STEALS FINER THINGS.

But the depredations of alcohol do not end with the abstraction of money and external and internal domestic comfort. How fervently we wish they did. But these after all are only the coarser things which he takes, and things most easily replaced. There are fine possessions, inherent in individuals, purchasable in no market of the world, for no sum of means, which he aims to take, and in unnumbered cases does take, upon which too high an estimate cannot be placed. Where means are limited and outward home comfort is small, and so little of these to take, he yet abstracts these finer things ; and where there is fullness of money and comfort, he takes them with these, so are they linked or joined that getting one he gets stronger or lighter hold upon the other. Surely when we have considered the entire field of his operations, the sum total of his abstractions, we will be prepared to brand him as a thief, with thirst insatiable, whose arms are never full, in whose den there is always room for more, in his work properly comparable to the moth in the garment and the vermin in the carcass, which consume until scarcely shreds or bones are left.

But look now at the rarer and more precious possessions—the gems of person which he takes !

REPUTATION.

First—*Reputation*. What words will describe its preciousness ! What figures tell or indicate its real value ! What has it not done for its owners ! What avenues to wealth and honor has it not opened ! How in misfortune or business disaster it has saved ! “I have no situation for you,” an employer has said to one, to twenty applicants for a vacancy that has occurred ; then an applicant comes and is answered, “Yes, I have a situation for you ;” and the explanation of what is apparently strange conduct, is found in the fact that the latter person applying sustains a very superior reputation. “I cannot let you have the money,” a banker says, to one who would borrow, “the note is properly drawn, the signature is correct, the endorser is reported worth many times the amount you desire, but I cannot loan it to you.” And then a man comes along, with a note of the same character, with an endorser that stands reputedly well, but his own signature is at the bottom, and that is the persuasive argument. “You can have it, sir.” Why this favoritism, the man who was denied a loan, enraged, inquires ? Ah, it’s no favoritism, it is a difference in reputation. We have an aged friend, who years ago told us, that in the panic of 1837, he had a heavy note discounted by consent of the directors of a then only bank in a certain section of this State, when ten persons before him had to his knowledge been re-

fused. He was surprised and expressed to the cashier his astonishment. The response was, "you have always, sir, promptly met your obligations with this bank." The intimation was that the others had not so done. Well has the great poet and dramatist written :

" The purest treasure mortal times afford
Is spotless reputation ; that away,
Men are but gilded loam or painted clay."

Now you know what a spot drink is on a man's character. How it compromises other virtues, excellencies or graces. I tell you of a man who is handsome, intellectually well endowed, brave, generous, gentle, and excite by my description your admiration. If you want a clerk for your store, an amanuensis, a private secretary, a companion for your son in pleasure or partner in business, a messenger to go abroad, a man for anything, you think as my description proceeds, O that is the man ! But when I close by saying, but he drinks, your pleasure falls, your face manifests disappointment, and you utter, no, no. " But he drinks," has kept individuals from alliances of different orders, they might otherwise easily have made ; from all sorts of places they might have had. Confess it man, whoever you are, even if a drunkard yourself, that fact lowers any person in your estimation. It is a thing against him. You want to steer clear of a man addicted to his cups. You do not wish him on your farm, nor in your store, nor in any situation where you cannot in an instant discharge or cast him out. A poor reputation that man has, who

whatever may be said to his praise, has this to his discredit—but he drinks.

Now men talk much of reputation. They put high value upon it seemingly. "I have nothing," a poor young man says, "but my reputation, you shall not take that away." So says to one who of him may have spoken disparagingly or concerning him have thrown out unkind hints and insinuations. Oh, yes, he is willing to fight for his reputation. He struts around in high dudgeon. You would think that he believed with the prophet, that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." He is ready to go to court, to fee a lawyer extravagantly, to save his reputation. Yet that same young man who talks so courageously and nicely about a reputation will deliberately walk to the bar of a saloon or hotel and give up his reputation to alcohol. Is it possible? Is this the extent of his sincerity in this matter of deserved concern? Men are sometimes led to question the correctness of a clear, an unmistakable and oft recurring sight. It seems in such conflict with avowals and pretences. Even when he has become the victim of drink he will talk about reputation. Alas, what of reputation regular drinking does not take from a man, is of little genuine value, so far as helping him in the struggles of life, so far as making him an object of trust, of regard, or even intelligent love, so far as leaving him any passport or recommendation to society, truly refined, educated, christian.

Again he steals position. A young man suddenly

looses a place. A door of lucrative labor closes against him. You notice it and ask, "what is the matter, I see Mr. so and so is unemployed?" The gentleman you address, acquainted better than yourself with the news of the day, says, "he has commenced drinking." That explains it. Who wants a man whose mind is confused by rum, either as engineer or fireman of any one of the thousands of railway trains that carry their precious human freight across the continent? Or who wishes such a man as this, either as captain or pilot of any of the magnificent steamships that plow the various waters of the world? Who wants such a man as superintendent, or director, or even under manager of our vast manufacturing establishments or of our commercial houses, where a clear head is always needed, if accidents in the one and losses in the other are to be avoided? Who wants such a man as educator of our children in any of our public schools? In brief, who wants to trust such a man with any business of account whatsoever? You perceive very readily how alcohol steals position from those who become subject to him. No man can with safety to himself retain in his employ the individual who imbibes spirituous liquors, though he may have nothing for him to do but watch his stable, take care of his horses, tend to his fires or carry his marketing. No capacity be it never so bright, or business adaptability be it never so marked, is offset to this habit that renders greatly incapable. The individual who is given to it, even in moderate degree, need not be surprised to be

notified at any time, by him under whom he holds employment, that his services are no longer desired. No man who wishes to build up a healthy trade, who wants to be the recipient of a large and safe custom; no corporation that aims to raise itself in popular favor and secure liberal public patronage, can afford to continue in his or its employ, one, who is under the control in any measure of this horrid thief. There are to-day hosts of men out of position or serving in positions far inferior to what they might creditably hold, the mental qualifications for prominent situations existing, but for drink. "I would like to employ such a man; he is a splendid accountant, he is a fine teacher, he is a skillful mechanic, he is thoroughly acquainted with the workings of his profession, but he is given to liquor and I cannot." Of what money; of what comfort; of what evidences of respect; what expressions of admiration does drink rob the man whom he robs of position!

HEALTH AND LIFE.

Beyond this he steals health and life. A little thought convinces us of this as completely as of the other charges we have made against him. Though alcohol is a wonderful restorative agent in certain conditions of the body, a great specific and indispensable to successful medical practice, yet in a normal condition of the body or in a state of health, it is injurious, deleterious in the proportion in which taken. They, whose business it is to observe the effect of things received into the system are agreed on this subject. The best physicians have

but one opinion. They warn those who would prolong life to avoid alcohol. "It poisons and corrupts the blood, it injures the organs of the body, prepares the system for fevers and inflammations of various kinds, depletes its power to battle with disease, produces apoplexy, paralysis, epilepsy." So the medical fraternity declare as a class while they repudiate the idea that it contributes to the healthy any benefit whatever. Dr. Gregory, an eminent practitioner in his day, writes, "I never got a patient by water drinking but thousands by strong liquors." Countless numbers of the healing art have had similar experience. Long ago an aged physician of forty years' extensive practice wrote—"Half the men, every year, who die of fevers, might recover, had they not been in the habit of using ardent spirits. Many a man down for weeks with a fever, had he not used ardent spirits, would not have been confined to his house a day. He might have felt a slight headache, but a little fasting would have removed the difficulty and the man been well. And many a man who was never intoxicated, when visited with a fever, might be raised up as well as not, were it not for that state of the system which daily moderate drinking occasions, who now in spite of all that can be done, sinks down and dies." Nor have eminent physicians of more recent times expressed opinions with these opinions conflicting. Thirty years ago Dr. Rush wrote, "it would take a volume to describe how much disorders natural to the human body are increased and complicated by the use

of spirituous liquors." And now what is the verdict of the business world on this subject. Make out an application for life insurance and write in answer to the question, Are you addicted to the use of intoxicating drinks? Yes. Qualify it, if you choose, by the addition of the word moderately, and notice if you are accepted. And if you are, if it is not at a higher premium or more reluctantly than you otherwise would be. Companies that desire to save themselves avoid risks of this class. Does not this fact of institutions, who are always studying the causes of mortality, always determining the classes of men who live longest, taking such precaution as this, speak powerfully in support of the proposition that alcohol destroys health and life.

It used to be thought that alcohol was necessary for men who were placed in exposed positions to make them equal to what of them was required, but that is no longer asserted or assumed by the best writers and observers. A great author in hygiene says, "That so far from ardent spirits being calculated to assist the human body in enduring fatigue, it has been found that the strongest liquors are the most enervating and this in whatever quantity they are consumed." That they are not necessary to physical endurance is well proven. "Livingston in all his African wanderings was a teetotaler from principle." How wonderful his exposure and power of endurance! "A Dr. Carpenter tells of an old man, a fowler, for years indirectly interested in the sale of intoxicating liquors and not likely to decry them un-

justly, who lived long after his fellow fowlers had died from hardship and exposure, who could only account for his better wear on the ground of total abstinence." This is in harmony with the testimony of "the gallant glorious Havelock," who in his narrative of the war of Affghanistan scouts the idea of rum as essential to endurance of the hardships even, which enter into active military life, and cites the case of his own soldiers, who without liquor accomplished marches and achieved victories literally amazing, "behaving after success with a forbearance and humanity simply unparalleled in history." "Let it not henceforth be argued," he says, "that distilled spirits are an indispensable portion of a soldiers' rations." And now is there anything in our experience or examination in conflict with what has just been referred to. Who endure safely the greatest amount of heat or cold? Who are proof against the elements? Who hold up under heavy work, physical and mental, the most effectually? Who are our noblest specimens of strength, firmness and power of nerve and muscle? Who latest show signs of feebleness and infirmity? We ask, do not they who other things considered, abstain entirely from intoxicating drinks? The age of a thoroughly sober man in health is almost always underestimated when judged by general appearance and movement; the age of the habitual drinker in best condition overestimated usually, judged in the same way.

But in another way than through the diseases he im-

plants and intensifies, or the unfitness to baffle against illness he occasions, does he destroy life. His best subjects often become displeased with themselves, grow weary of the servitude in which he holds them and then lay forcible hands upon themselves. Of five hundred suicides annually occurring in this land he is declared to be the direct cause. Then he infuriates man against his fellowman, leaves him with out any control of himself, so that without any just provocation or upon slightest provocation he takes life. Need we assert that murder after murder is committed by persons under the influence of strong drink. The estimate for the United States by one who claims to speak knowingly is two hundred and fifty yearly. Ah, there have been few murderers who were not in greater or less measure, for longer or shorter time, subject to this demon.

Thus of everything of earthly value does alcohol rob mankind. He is not content to take one thing we prize, he aims to take all. And though men know this to be the case, from what they have heard, seen and felt, yet how little they stand in dread of him. The way men regard and treat him notwithstanding his design, reminds us much of Homer's legend of the wooden horse built by the Grecians in the Trojan war. There it stood in front of the massive walls of Troy in all its ponderous proportions. The Trojans look at it admiringly. The thought does not occur to them that within its huge body lay concealed the bravest warriors of Greece. They have seen the foe burn up their tents and sail

away to Tenedos. Believing the war over they pull down their wall and drag within the city of Priam and Hector the great tall horse. Once in, a signal from a spy is given, the fleet return, the conflict is renewed and forth from the false horse come the victorious braves. So men handle wine and whiskey, ale and beer, look at it admiringly, assure themselves that no fiend lurks in it, take it to their confidence and favor, give it a place within the walls of their physical being, until it turns on them and makes them its charmed and secured victims.

STEALS HOPES OF FUTURE BLESSEDNESS.

Nor is this the end of his terrible work, he robs us of every bright hope of the future, of the fruit of holy hope, the everlasting inheritance. In the light of divine truth how can anyone addicted to the use of ardent spirits reasonably expect admission to heaven. The church on earth excludes such from her pales; the voice of the people condemns the religious pretensions and expectations of such where any of the one are manifested or any of the other expressed. While the scriptures class drunkenness and murder side by side as works of the flesh, and affirm that "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Ah, it were enough to be deprived the brightness of this present life; to be deprived of all that constitutes the delight and joy of the life to come, how dreadful.

SHALL HE BE TOLERATED?

Such being the work of this thief, as they that are

candid cannot but know, shall he be viewed with toleration? If any of you who read these lines have been keeping alcohol in bottle, demijohn or cask, in any one of his forms, in cupboard, closet, cell or cellar, anywhere, will you not eject him, or at least retire him from use as a beverage? If he has been leading you to places where he revels, and shows himself in sparkling, foaming glass, been making you his dupe, his victim, will you not tear lose from him? He can do you nothing, under these circumstances, but injury. To rob you, degrade you, make you the sport of better men, to render your home miserable and your parents, wife and children sad, unhappy, broken-hearted—to destroy you and yours in hell is his ulterior object.

"O God ! that men should put an enemy
In their mouths to steal their brains !"

So Cassio says to Iago in Shakespear's Othello. Alas, not only brains but heart as well. Not only the seat of thought, but the seat or fountain of all the tender and sweet emotions of which human nature, sanctified by divine power, is capable. Not only intellect which exalts, dignifies, ennobles, lifts man far above the irrational creation, makes possible to him knowledge of most enrapturing character and ways of life feasting and felicitous, but soul likewise, capable of grandest and most soothing experiences, of aspirations the loftiest, of present realizations the most blissful, of future results golden as meridian sunlight and vast and deep as eternity. Cast him away before the priceless things we

have specified are taken from you ; before your children, if you have any, are made for shame to shun the light of day or come into like ruinous habits with yourself; before your parents die through grief, or your wife of a heart crushed and broken ; before some desolation is occasioned no reformation even can ever heal ; before the ardor of your youth is consumed by the fiery liquid and gates of wealth and honor, of abundance or full competence are forever shut to you. If his hold upon you is such that you cannot easily shake him off, call the omnipotent Christ to your assistance. Enter into union and fellowship, by faith and obedience with him, and then though his hold is powerful you can shake it off. If his hold is not great, yet assistance of the Lord, will enable you the easier to free yourself ; if he has no hold at all, remember that in Christ you are safe against him. Resolution may do something for you, a signing of the pledge may help somewhat, but nothing is able to deliver, nor is anything effectual to prevent save the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Avail yourself of Him who is deliverer if you are in thralldom, and Saviour and protector if yet you are free.

God help us all, and lead us day by day,

God help us all !

We cannot walk alone the perfect way,

Evil allures us, tempts us and we fall,

We are but human and our power is small ;

None of us may boast, and not a day

Rolls over our heads but each hath need to say,

God help us all !



II.

TOBACCO.

We now present to the notice of the reader what we are pleased to denominate the second thief in and of homes or their comforts. We place him second, not because next to alcohol his work is most ruinous, but most prevalent, and moreover because he nearly always accompanies alcohol, though we must say, alcohol does not, by great odds, always accompany him.

NATURE AND TREATMENT.

He is far less tyrannical. His thieving work not usually so rapid. Not so desolating or destructive, in thousands of instances really unperceptibly harmful, only of visible injury as through them he reaches others, where he can be less easily withstood, restrained or supported. A thief that is entertained at countless firesides, has long been guest in happiest homes, is well spoken of by many educated and refined persons and commended to others as a most harmless fellow, giving substantial comfort for all the means, and of course where abundance does not exist, comfort otherwise purchasable with the means, which he takes. A thief that is seldom denounced in the public prints, authors and editors themselves being for the most part willing to his abstraction ;

against whom even the pulpit is largely silent, the clergy being in vast numbers among his victims or subjects. A thief that has been eulogized in prose and poetry, in centuries past and the present, by good men, some very good men of various tongues and countries. A thief whose thievings are limited, as he cannot seriously damage reputation, cannot often deprive of position attained to, nor once in many times interfere with our attainment of a position desired. Cannot so surely, nor generally, nor directly, steal from us a hope of blessedness hereafter or prevent entrance thereupon, though he may be in cases, as shall be seen, indirectly instrumental to even this.

MORALITY OF SUBMISSION NOT ARGUED.

We do not propose in this chapter to argue the morality of submission in any measure—or to any extent to this thief; in other words, to discuss the question, “is it morally wrong to make use of tobacco?” We believe that it would be difficult to successfully maintain a general affirmative of the proposition. In any topics which we may present in this work, the great thing we shall aim at will be, to prove them thieves, causes of the poverty of homes. The rightfulness or wrongfulness of any or all of them under any circumstances; their barely tolerant rightfulness or their entire unjustifiableness, their sinfulness we may express opinion upon, and so intimate personal conviction; and also record with reference to some of them, considered in this light, the opinions of others; but we shall for the most part leave

our readers to decide the morality of each matter noticed from its effects, or settle the question, if it arises, in their own minds from what they have already read or heard of able discussions thereupon; from the views of the excellent spirits we may cite; from their own conscience enlightened by the spirit of God and instructed in the holy scriptures, the one infallible rule of faith and practice.

A THIEF NEVERTHELESS.

Whatever apology may be offered for the use of tobacco, however ably the habit may be defended, this one thing remains, he is a thief. He takes what is needed to purchase the necessities of life. What would impart convenience and comfort; what would educate and refine and qualify for high callings among men. Thus he makes unhappiness, causes destitution, confines many of his patrons or slaves and those who are bound to them by blood, to life's lowest and saddest walks. This may be said of tobacco, without the least exaggeration and is really faint portraiture of his robbing work.

TAKES MONEY AND WHAT OF WORTH IT SECURES.

Here is a young man, scarcely such, a boy two-thirds way through his teens earning from fifty to seventy-five cents a day. His parents are poor and he had early to go to shop, or farm, or store, to aid in their as well as his own support. He has contracted the habit of smoking, in a majority of cases we may presume, not of chewing. Two, three, four, rising to five and six cigars,

according to the leisure moments he finds in his work, does he consume every day. Costing in the beginning one cent apiece possibly, but as his taste is cultivated and he becomes acquainted with the superiority of one brand over another, two, three, four to five cents. Now multiply the cost by the number consumed and we have from two to thirty cents expended daily in this way. Strike an average and we have fifteen cents as the every day expenditure of thousands upon thousands of young men toiling for a living in the shops, farms, stores and manufacturing establishments of our land. Take that amount and multiply it by the days of the year and we have as a product fifty-four dollars and seventy-five cents. Suppose that amount were laid away every year for ten years, from the age of seventeen to twenty-seven, (for may we not hope that previous to seventeen few persons smoke,) and mark what with interest it would become, well on towards six hundred dollars. Sufficient to start many a mechanic in business for himself. More money than hundreds of the wealthiest men this nation ever produced, had, when they entered upon commercial life. Enough after the lapse of half that time or little more, to enable many a young man if he desired to quit the anvil, the bench, the counter, the farm, study for a year in a good classical school, then finding position in a doctor's or lawyer's office, support him, with such means as industrious and willing he could pick up, while preparing for one of these professions. We could write the names of three brothers in this State, one post-

master for upwards of ten years past in one of the largest cities of the Union; one a prominent lawyer with a practice worth from four to six thousand dollars a year; one a most successful medical practitioner, all of whom, when they turned from hard labor to the doors of the academy had less than three hundred dollars. We can name the president of a flourishing collegiate institution who saved from hard toil one hundred dollars with which he prepared himself to teach a common winter school; who with the wages thus received educated himself further and secured a school at increased compensation, took these latter earnings and continued his studies until he could and did enter college; left it when his money was exhausted and labored until he could go on, and so completed a collegiate and theological education. Though older (when he graduated) than are most young men when they leave the walls of literary institutions, he has surpassed the majority, as he now stands honored with the title of D. D. and the presidency of a fine university. He never smoked a cigar, nor turned a "quid of tobacco," or tipped a glass of beer. Hundreds and thousands of men who loiter about the corners of the street for want of something to do; or toil discontented at heaviest labor, cursing their luck and wondering why their lot is not easier, might if they would, find a reason for it, in a lack of ambition early in life to improve their condition, and in wasteful habits. "I never had the means to get an education," a young man said, who was intellectually well endowed

and who was bemoaning his hard lot, while he coveted that of one who was companion and neighbor with him in youth but was now in affluent circumstances. He spoke sincerely, believing what he said, yet to say it, removed from his mouth a fragrant cigar. What he expended in that direction from year to year was as much in the way of money as his envied neighbor had in the beginning in the matter of pecuniary means to promote or lift him.

But not every man desires an education, nor wishes to secure a livelihood in professional walks. No, and well it is that such desire is not universal. It would fearfully disturb and disarrange matters if it were, even if capacity, which is not, were possessed by all men. Behold then what this sum expended in smoke would do in the way of providing a home. The fifty dollars and more thus yearly thrown away would in ten years give to hundreds living in courts and alleys, homes more desirable than those they occupy. Not in the heart of town or city, but on the outskirts of the same, with a parcel of ground about them. Not massive structures, but small, neat dwellings, more comfortable than they have. And then the rent they would save annually, added to the cost of tobacco consumed, would in ten years put in bank or at interest or in other property a matter of two thousand dollars. Ten thousand men and more have thrown away in smoke in ten years a greater amount of means than the abodes they occupy cost or are worth. And yet such wonder why they are

poor and often in bitter complainings reflect upon the justice and beneficence of the Almighty. The other week we saw in a religious paper a statement to this effect, that a "Mr. Hubbard, of Connecticut, when eighteen years of age determined to lay aside daily, the amount of money he would have spent for cigars, had he been a smoker. At the end of each month the sum thus accumulated was put at interest. From time to time this was lifted and so invested as to produce more than the ordinary interest it would have drawn. By wise and shrewd management the fund finally amounted to fifteen thousand dollars, with which the owner purchased a magnificent residence he now occupies." Not every young man following the same line of abstinence might in twenty or thirty years have done as well, yet hundreds might equal him and multitudes make approach that would amaze and gratify.

Or consider the immediate comforts this money would buy if a home is already had, or if to possess one there is no desire. It would yearly new carpet a floor; new clad children or educate them in the fine arts; would put pictures upon the walls, and entertaining books upon the table; or a wholesome daily and weekly newspaper in hand. It would be sufficient to satisfy unnumbered ardent, simple, rightful wishes that as it is cannot be. We have known children to ask their fathers for a quarter of a dollar to buy a trinket for their hair or person, to whom the response was, "I cannot afford it." Fathers that spent that amount every day

in smoke. The child must go without the dress it covets; the ribbon or ornament it would like to have; the book or journal it craves; not because it is really beyond the power of the parent to provide them, no, but because he smokes. There are children in every large town and city, throngs of them, who the summer through scarce taste of fruit. With hunger that shows itself all over their faces they pass through the markets or stand before places where the products of groves and vineyards and orchards and gardens are held for sale. The degree of their hunger is sometimes seen in the greed with which they seize a half-decayed orange, apple, peach, the fruit merchant casts away, or the sour melon he rejects. In their homes they seldom or never taste any of these things. "We cannot afford it," the husband and father says, usually impatiently, often angrily, to the child, and yet what he spends for tobacco would put berries, and pears, and apples, and plums on the table throughout the season. Notwithstanding such a man calls himself a parent and provider. In the face of these things, which are not mere affirmations or assertions, but facts as sight and hearing attest, is not tobacco a great thief in the home of the poor man or man of ordinary income at least?

STEALS ABILITY TO DO DUTY BY HOLY INTERESTS.

But this is not the end of his theft. He consumes or steals ability to do duty by holy interests. We have asked a number of men in the course of our ministry for contributions toward church improvement, mis-

sionary projects, collegiate and theological endowments and have been answered, "indeed I would like to but cannot." Men who if they had saved but the half of what they expended in cigars could have done something quite generous. "Why do you not come to church?" we have inquired of a parishoner, and confusedly he has responded when pressed, "Well, to tell the truth I have not fit clothes." He had not, but what he spent for tobacco and other things fully as useless, would have procured him, as frequently, and in as full measure as needed, neat and substantial raiment from head to foot, and left him a liberal surplus for church support. To-day there are countless persons staying away from church, because, as they allege, "they cannot pay pew rent and will not occupy a pew for nothing," who might easily save from cigars what would secure eligible sittings for themselves and families, and provide all things necessary to comfortable and edifying worship. For there are persons doing this as humble and poor as those who thus excuse themselves, and doing it with an amount less than that of which the first permit tobacco to rob them. One cannot but feel disgust for the man who spending from fifty to one hundred dollars a year for tobacco and beer, complains of the pride and costliness of churches and justifies and explains his absence from them, on this miserable and as we have said, false ground, namely, that a poor man cannot attend them.

Does any one suppose that God will excuse such per-

sons from a violation of his commands which call for "holy convocations." From a disregard of the exhortation "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." From a non-conformity to the example of Christ, who, "as his custom was, went into the synagogue on the sabbath day." Surely not. No well person need be absent from God's house, for either of the reasons above given. If there is a case of genuine inability to attend the services of the sanctuary, proper raiment wanting, and yet a desire to attend existing, God as sure as the world endures would make clear that way. We challenge in the history of a thousand years any one such case in the christian towns and cities of our land. Hundreds there may be who sincerely so think, but it is a mistake after all, as could be easily proven. In allowing this useless weed to deprive them of ability to do duty to holy things, they deprive themselves of the blessings, the purifying and elevating advantages that flow therefrom; make themselves liable to condemnation for evident duty willingly and deliberately neglected; vastly diminish their power for good, or increase their power for evil and thus beside themselves injure others. Men pull out the false plant or sucker that absorbs the fluid from the true stalk of corn, that would prevent if allowed full development of stalk and blade and ear; men pick off the useless leaves and shoots of the vine, that consuming sap retard real growth, diminish the size of grapes or hinder yield, but many men that do this, with many more that do not, do not

pluck off or out the habit that diminishes their moral fruitfulness or renders them wholly barren.

DEADENS CONSCIENCE.

But further than we have observed, this thief steals in countless cases a sense of moral obligation, or induces failure to keep one of the most positive of divine requirements. A young man whose religious education has been tolerably well ordered acquires the habit of smoking. He happens out of cigars on the Sabbath through oversight or forgetfulness to provide them. The habit is there, however, and calls for gratification. The tobacconist's establishment is open and ablaze and he gets what he craves. At first he may hesitate to yield to the temptation to purchase on God's day. In many cases may successfully withstand it, but who does not know that in unnumbered instances there is consenting to it. If he goes timidly at first, looking up and down the street to make sure that his parents and intimate family friends do not see him, yet shortly he goes bravely and cares not who sees him. Goes often, ready to buy on Sunday as well as another day. Stops to hear a vulgar story or engage in an improper conversation. And after going here awhile on the Sabbath he cares not to go anywhere, all tenderness of conscience with reference to his obligation to keep God's day inviolate, gone. A keen sense of propriety or the fine sensibilities of right and honor are stolen by tobacco, again and again, and the heart prepared for more heinous violations of the laws of God.

So also he steals or diminishes moral influence. It may not be much nor always, but somewhat and occasionally. The temperance advocate if a smoker, labors at a disadvantage in his attacks upon drunkenness. He cannot say anything against the uselessness or wastefulness of it, for he himself is supporting what is no more necessary and what is expensive without any profit whatsoever. He can say little against the danger of very moderate drinking of domestic wines, how they gradually instil an appetite for more frequent and stonger drink, for he is patron to a matter, that according to wise and excellent authority leads in the same way. Dr. Adam Clarke, in an admirable treatise on tobacco, published as long ago as 1837, remarks that "so inseparable an attendant is drinking on smoking, that in some places the same word expresses both; thus pee'nd, in the Bengalee language, signifies to drink and to smoke. "It is with pain of heart," writes this eminent author, "that I am obliged to say, I have known several, who, through their immoderate attachment to the pipe, have become mere sots. There are others who are walking unconcernedly in the same dangerous road." A writer of about the same date calls attention to the similitude between the name of the God of wine and this weed, the one Bacchus and the other tobacco, and speaks of acquaintance with the one influencing to acquaintance with the other. "As great a physician as Dr. Agnew years ago asserted, that the use of the pipe leads to the immoderate use of ardent spirits."

Another physician of equal celebrity has left on record this opinion of the relation of these vices: "Smoking and chewing tobacco, by rendering water and other simple liquors insipid to the taste, dispose very much to the stronger stimulus of ardent spirits; hence the practice of smoking cigars has been followed by the use of brandy and water as a common drink." And so we might add testimony. Is not this fact sufficient proof of our assertion that you find comparatively few smokers who are not fond of wine and beer, whether they drink it or not, and very few who can cease the latter if addicted thereto until they have ceased the former? You certainly see how at a disadvantage in the way of pleading the greatest and most essential reform of the day, that man is, no matter what his position, who makes free and constant use of tobacco.

INJURES HEALTH.

Once more, health is injured by him. This is the confession of individuals—the attestation of physicians—the impression of our own minds. Though it is possible to cite many aged healthy persons as long accustomed to indulge him, it does not follow that tobacco has anything to do with their long life. Neither can it be said that vigor would not be greater and so the probability of additional years stronger if he had never been countenanced at all. We will not dispute that in a few cases its moderate use may have been physically beneficial, yet we claim that the cases are few and far overbalanced by cases resulting adversely. It is far from uncommon to

hear persons who have been indisposed for years say, "My health is much improved since I quit using tobacco," also to hear those who have as yet determined upon no such abstinence and are not well—"I have no doubt I would be better if I abstained from the use of the weed." It has unmistakably injured the health of thousands and hurried them to premature graves. The race as such would be stronger, capable of greater exertion and endurance, possessed of steadier nerves, more powerful muscle, clearer minds, if its use had long ago been discarded.

TREATMENT ADVISED.

Let me entreat the dismissal of this thief. Particularly on the part of those who can only tolerate him or allow his stealings at the expense of their domestic comfort. Who by consenting to his demands, deprive their families, wives and children, of substantial comforts and of higher enjoyments they should have. Who indulge him at the sacrifice of ability to worship God in his house and give to the support of his glorious Gospel. Those who can indulge him without causing any domestic want, inconvenience or misery; any robbery of God, should still see that it be without any breaking of the command to keep the Sabbath holy, and in a way so restrained and moderate, as not to contribute to the formation of a worse habit, or to injure influence of blessing and saving character upon others. And not only this, but if they seriously desire to limit the work of this thief, upon the young especially, possibly the sons of

their own homes, the scholars of their own school or class, prevent him being a means to their violation of the Holy Sabbath and to the sinfulness that sooner or later is sure to endanger the soul that becomes heedless of this perpetual divine obligation, then let them give their patronage of the weed to those persons who love God enough, and the church enough, and sufficiently regard the feelings of pious people and the spiritual well-being of the masses to keep their stores and shops closed on the one day out of seven the church has set apart for the special worship of Almighty God. And thus help on that time when men who deal in this product, who have no conscience as respects the third commandment, "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," will in self-protection be constrained to cease their sales on that day. Moreover, let them pray and labor for a deep national and state conviction of the sin of Sunday traffic in any and every thing save what may be required to ease pain or preserve life. For fearless legislation thereupon and law uncompromisingly forbidding. And besides all this, in their municipal and borough elections, give their suffrages to men without regard to party who have too much purity and principle, to accept a bribe for dereliction of duty, and too great bravery to fear in its discharge any intimidation of the baser element, that in all cities and boroughs so largely sport with and defy authority. When once, as a rule, those who hold official prominence in nation, state and community, become indeed what they are

represented and claim to be, guardians of the public peace and welfare, many an evil that flourishes, blooms and bears, poisons the atmosphere of society and feeds to death, temporal and eternal, the body and soul of men, will be cut down, uprooted and thus eradicated. Honor to the men (for there are some,) who deserve the designation accorded them. May their noble example find many imitators and their efforts in suppressing vice and disorder be properly recognized and encouraged by the press, secular and religious, by the church and the general public.

If among those who read this book there is anyone engaged in this traffic, then let me say to that one, if you wish to do a legitimate business, legitimate in the eyes of God and the best portion of the community; if you do not want to contribute to the real spiritual degradation of any man—to his defiance of divine requirement and to the evils that so often proceed from this—to his ultimate bitterness of spirit—to his endless woe; if you do not want to occasion the parents of smokers, their wives and children anxiety and alarm, close your establishment on the Sabbath. Effect and allow no sale. Let it be the rule and no exception. No matter who keeps open, no matter who threatens you with the loss of his custom. Better ten dollars less, than one more and it representative in any measure of soul distress and ruin. Better twenty men's displeasure and abandonment, than heavens disfavor and the imprecations of persons who at your hands may feel them-

selves injured. God help men engaged in this business to see the propriety of such counsel and perceiving, help them act correspondingly. There are businesses that lift men and then there are businesses that lower men, but the grandest man, is he who lifts, exalts, ennobles and dignifies legitimate business.





III.

BAD BOOKS.

The things after which the thieves which infest society aspire, and to possess which they direct their genius and effort, are and ever have been the same. Not only in one country and among one race and class of men, but in all countries and among all classes. Gold, silver, jewels, or things readily convertible into these are what they take or abstract. And so the moral thieves which commit ravages among men, always deprive of the same valuables. It is money, comfort, influence, health, life and things kindred in character which they take. As, however, the operations of the former kind are not restricted to the citizens of any one calling, so those of the latter take in persons of all descriptions. Some of the first may do their work principally with banks and bankers, but all of the first, cover in their workings people of all callings who have any of what constitutes their aim or object. Some of the second may operate upon only certain states of society, but all of the second embrace in their operations all states.

CLASSES AMONG WHICH THIS THIEF OPERATES.

The thief to which we shall now turn our attention, namely, bad books or demoralizing literature, operates

very largely upon a class, upon whom the thieves described in the preceeding chapters do not operate to any great extent. Upon the women of humble homes, poor women, and upon the boys and girls of such homes. It may be safe to say that while he does a work upon those subject to the vices or thieves already specified, he does a great work among these last named, who have not as yet come into such subjection and servitude. That he does much to put our lads in the control of the thieves alcohol and tobacco; much to put the daughters and women of the needy classes under the dominion of other moral tyrants, if not these, can very easily be proven.

BASE USES OF THE PRESS.

It is a reflection painful, but not refutable, that the press, that is used to publish the ripest thought, to give form and expression to the purest and noblest emotions that can stir intellect and heart—that educates in theology, in law, in medicine and in all the useful arts—that restrains passion and developes sweetest qualities of soul—that inculcates patriotism—that enjoins love to God and fellow-men—that kindles loftiest ambition in manhood and youth—the ripening, renewing, educating and saving worth of whose issues, the most eloquent tongue and readiest pen would be unable to declare or portray, that this same, the press, is likewise employed to put in print the morally deadliest things, that basest natures occupied by satan can conceive and commit to it. Things that blight more effectually than any frost; that desolate more completely than any whirlwind, since

far more easily can the work of the one be restored or repaired, than can the ruinous effects of the other. How poisonous and deadly many press issues are adjudged by men competent to fair opinion, may be inferred from the action of the government in watching its mails and preventing the transmission of much printed matter.

CLASSIFICATION OF BAD BOOKS—ATHEISTIC—VULGAR—
FICTITIOUS.

We divide demoralizing publications into three classes. First, those that are atheistic in their nature. That arraign the Christian faith. Give it a pretended trial or examination like that the Jews gave its "author and finisher" at the bar of Pilate and in the presence of Herod. That labor to undermine it with all sorts of theories and the presentation in strongest fashion of every conceivable matter that can be construed as in conflict with it. That denounce and ridicule the pure doctrines of the divine word and make sport of many of its histories, narratives and miracles. That scout the idea of a future life, of rewards and punishments, of accountability for privileges enjoyed or means of grace afforded. That in effect say, consult your own inclinations, indulge them, eat, drink, be merry, get out of life its most delicious draughts according to your own taste and appetite. The class of these publications may not be as extensive as the other classes we shall mention, but they are a terrible thief as we shall see.

Second, those that are merely vulgar. Denying nothing, confessing and teaching nothing, satisfying them-

selves with picturing the most beastly acts to which men and women can resort. With describing the lowest and the most sensual scenes that transpire on earth. Uncovering what God meant should for the purity and protection of society remain covered. What few persons can look upon or read without moral injury. There are many papers, pamphlets and books of this order. Literal pools of filth. So loathsome that men who write them, will in many instances conceal their names, and impose strictest secrecy upon publishers. Ah, so foul that publishers will often suppress the imprint of their firm, and men even sunken in vice, will have no one they highly esteem and respect witness them having such in possession. Coming into the hands of young men and maidens as these works sometimes do, they early educate in what should to childhood and youth be unknown.

And now the third and last class of demoralizing literature we put under the general head of fiction. We will, of course, not be understood to say that all fiction is demoralizing in its tendency and so its purchase and reading thieving. No, there is literature of purely imaginative character, emanating from refined and renewed intellects that is wholesome in its results, elevating and educating. That gives broad and correct views of life. Leads to the detestation of mean acts. Tends to the subjugation of the passions and implants and quickens the loftier emotions. This, however, is not that read by the masses. That mostly read is contrariwise distin-

guished ; is degrading and despoiling. We inquire now the things of which this literature deprives men.

QUANTITY AND COST.

Like the articles previously considered this costs. Can only be had for money. Really is largely written for this sole purpose. There are many works prepared for press by authors who have no view to pecuniary compensation ; many works by authors or societies at their own expense, the constraining idea being the good that may be accomplished ; but no such motive influences the publication of works that traduce the Christian religion ; that divulge the worst and most obscene of earthly transactions ; that feast the lowest fancies and appetites of men. No, the motive here is hate and pay. How much money is expended in this way can safely be estimated by the quantity issued and sold. "An English writer of some years past gave the annual average of these issues and sales for that land as follows : Infidel publications 11,200,200. Atheistic publications 624,000. Papers and periodicals openly vicious and immoral—ten stamped and six unstamped ones—the aggregate circulation of which was 17,942,000 copies. Sixty pernicious sheets, entire issue, 10,400,000 ; worst class, 520,000 ; making a total of 40,686,200. The annual issues of bibles, testaments and religious works of every kind at that period were 24,418,620, leaving a balance on the side of evil of 16,268,580." We have not been able to secure the figures for the United States, but we fear not to say, that if the issue here of this baser

sort of publications, is less than the average in England as estimated years ago, the issue of the lighter, likewise profitless sort, that if less speedily is still sooner or later mentally and morally injurious, is greater. What sums of money spent in the purchase of all these! What thousands make their living by the sale of the latter, the trashy! You travel on a railroad car and this is largely the kind of literature you are invited to buy. Travel on steamship and it is the same thing. Approach the book stands in our extensive railway depots, and this is conspicuous before you. Mark the volumes in the hands of visitors to sea-side resorts and behold they are principally of this order. Go into the homes of the people who inhabit courts and tenement houses, whose earthly abodes are most barren of refinement and comfort and if you perceive any reading matter there at all, this is likely its character. Books, pamphlets, that cost money in their purchase, that give nothing but evil in return, and are consequently thieves. In fact among the poorer classes this cheap bad literature has freest circulation. It may be said that this is because they have not means to procure the purer issues of fiction. But if they have means for the trashy and impure kind, they would have means at least for weeklies and monthlies, not fictitious, which would, because of the benefit their reading confers, not be thieves, but helpers to wealth and happiness. For these last impart useful knowledge, instil holy aspirations, work out social exaltation. We have given charity in homes where in-

digence stared visitors in the face and yet have seen on soiled and torn bed copies of these ruinous issues. We knew a woman who could give nothing to the church, could not pay, she said, for the church paper, which would have been a safe guard to her children and might under God have blessed a profligate husband, who had still enough to purchase two of these weeklies regularly. We have stepped to the counters of book stores in flourishing cities and inquired as to the sale of such papers and been told that people who begged their bread, managed to have means requisite to the purchase of copies of these publications, and were promptly on hand the day of their arrival. Millions of money are thus worse than thrown away. What suffering they would relieve and remedy! What comfort they would provide and bestow! What blessings of manifold nature obtain! Invested in healthful, educational literature what revenues might they not eventually bring. Many, many men and women, boys and girls have squandered in this way what would have secured a library of scores of volumes on valuable topics, or procured other domestic comfort equally substantial.

A THIEF OF TIME.

Besides money, literature of this sort steals time. Its reading does not only occupy moments that cannot be devoted to duty or pursuit, but moments and hours that could be most profitably employed. While at school we knew more than one boy to neglect the preparation of a lesson for a novel of absorbing interest; knew them

to be absent from prayers and chapel exercises for the same reason; for the same cause excusing themselves from church and sunday school attendance. We have seen boys in country stores, in lawyers' and physicians' offices, rising reluctantly to answer customers and calls, short and discourteous in manner, because anxious to get back to an exciting tale, thus imperiling custom and patronage; in both cases the book stealing time that ought to have been otherwise employed. Nor this alone, but the healthful results, mental and pecuniary, that it could have produced. We remember when a child, hearing neighbors speak of a woman, who had a passion for light literature, neglecting her family, allowing the children to go untidily in garments that needed mending, (that by timely mending might have saved for a time at least outlay for new ones,) neglecting household matters, permitting things to mould, rust, and burn for the same reason namely, to finish a novel she had commenced or read a new one that had just come into possession. As then, so now all manner of labor is neglected or postponed, various duties—domestic, social, business and religious—to gratify taste for the charmingly incredible, the fascinating unreal. Thus time in which labor is to be performed, and duties discharged is stolen. It may seem a small thing, time, but when its equivalent is considered it cannot longer be so regarded. Time is money, is an adage, the truth of which is apparent to no one more than to the man of means. It is equal to money. It is the basis of wages. The

basis of interest. How much time, says employer, so much money. How long invested, so great dividend. So many years, other things being equal, so vast agricultural, commercial and manufacturing interests. Equal to money in another sense, for the more fully and profitably employed the sooner in any profession, in any occupation, it brings returns. Moreover, it is equal to position, to honor, to comfort, to plenty, to peace, for only as it is spent are these wrought out. O that it should be exchanged for what in every respect makes poor and besides dishonors and discontents.

OF MIND AND HEART INNOCENCE AND PURITY.

It steals innocence of thought and purity and chastity of habit. This literature of which we are discoursing. What guilty wisdom or knowledge is by it imparted ! How many young persons have fairly trembled when inducted through debasing books and newspaper agencies, they stood at first within the realm of the low and vulgar information that may be acquired ? Not without the feeling to innocent youth, of shame, of holding what their youth had better for its purest preservation never have known. Take the children that have disappointed their parents by disgraceful acts, that have entered without consultation upon relations that have dishonored and pained them, and how generally are they children who have been given to the perusal of this literature, that, if it exalts not a disregard of all filial obligation, countenances and treats it as deserving of no censure. Early and unequal mar-

riages, full of bitterness and tears ; elopements that forever disgrace chief actors and crush in sorrow abandoned ones ; divorces, that for the most part cast blight and shadow on those that cause and secure them, with things with these connected, are fruit of this sort of literature. Many burglars and house-breakers have confessed that their first impulses in this direction were received while reading books that portrayed the daring and cunning of some fictitious robber. Many blasphemers from works of this nature, obtained their first lesson in profanity, were made by original and easy characters contained in them to feel that it was a big thing, a manly thing to swear. In reading them others acquired a passion for amusements and games dangerous in their tendency and had an ambition aroused within them, to be in these expert and skillful. There is in fact no manner of iniquity in which writings of this description are not educational.

Take the sons and daughters of our homes, whose thoughts, as all their words and ways indicate, are pure. Who blush upon the introduction in conversation of any vulgar topic. Who hold no guilty secret. Plot no meetings behind the back of their parents, but take their fathers and mothers into strictest confidence. Who have no love for street running. Who do not flirt their handkerchiefs, nor cast eyes askance—boys at girls or girls at men. Take these model specimens of our homes, inquire into their habits, their literary associations, and you will find that in the reading of such writings as we

have described they do not indulge. Bold to brazenness—impure to licentiousness—deceitfulness even to perfidy—untrustiness to criminal dishonesty—filial disobedience to open profligacy—vulgarity to excessive profanity—quarrelings and disputations to murder are the death fruits which this low order of literature sows and grows in the heart that opens to it.

OF MORAL POWER AND SERVICE.

Again it steals moral power and service. The health of the body bears marked relation to the food that by the organs of the body is received and assimilated. If the diet be poor or unwholesome, vigorous health cannot be maintained. We admit this and are ever acting upon this principle. Moral power, like physical and mental, is dependent upon the supplies which foster it, is even like to the quality of these. Feed the soul on husks, on the weak, the light, the unreal and frequently improbable things of fictitious writings and we have what? Why a very weak man or woman so far as decided influence is concerned. A literal nothing on all moral subjects which agitate communities. The support such persons can give in private or social conversation, in public gatherings, through the press to any movement grand in itself and looking to noble results is so slight as to be scarcely perceptible. It is truly wonderful the number of persons who are without marked or felt moral influence. Unable to the presentation of argument, solid argument in behalf of excellent matters. Moral nonentities. Strong only in gossip. Minds empty

on all live and profitable questions. And this because of what they read. If the time that is given to fiction, were spent in bible study ; in the acquisition of historic knowledge ; in reading discussions or dissertations upon topics that pertain to the civil, social and religious welfare of mortals, what moral power that is not, would be possessed. How many a noble measure would move successfully onward ! What assistance in what is good, would parents be to children, the elder to the younger members of the family, companions to friends ! How many young ladies thus endowed, morally strong, would save young men out of the bondage and ruin of immoral practices, "from evil communications which corrupt good manners." How many a weak wife would reclaim the husband, who has wandered from the paths of sobriety, and marital and parental fidelity ! Now all this power, power that would amount to this in a vast array of cases, if not entirely stolen by bad reading, is lost because the bad is not by good reading displaced.

ADVICE OF AN ENGLISH NOVELIST.

In the light of these declarations or of this extensive theft of precious wares, a successful denial of which would be no easy task, the advice of one of the most pleasing English writers of the eighteenth century is not difficult to understand. Our reference is to Oliver Goldsmith. Himself the author of a novel—*The Vicar of Wakefield*—that obtained considerable celebrity directly after its issue from the press and that still after the lapse of a full hundred years continues to be read. Not only of

this, but of various other fictitious writings, plays, poems, tales. Writing an earnest letter to his brother respecting the education of his son, he says to him, "above all never let your son touch a novel or romance." Possibly he himself had felt the injurious effects of their reading, resulting in their writing. Possibly the two contributed largely to the prodigality and sensuality, the recklessness and abandon of his life, which further resulted in his early death at forty-six. Naturally gifted, the author of several most readable and instructive histories in addition to his fictitious productions, who knows but for his evil associations, with the formation and maintenance of which his reading had much to do, he might have shone along with his brilliant contemporaries, Burk and Johnson, who admired his literary effusions, lived to a better purpose and illumined with a steadier and healthier light their own and succeeding generations. Ah, who better than one who has suffered from an evil, is in condition to admonish and advise against it? Who better than the drunkard against drunkenness? The inveterate consumer of tobacco against the noxious weed? The gambler against the gaming table? The reader and writer of novels against works of this order? Shall not the opinion of this man whose name and word history transmits to us be regarded worthy at least of entertainment and consideration?

THE FIRST CLASS RUINS SPIRITUALLY.

The last two classes of demoralizing literature—the vulgar and fictitious—may, and do prevent quite fre-

quently, a realization of the highest destiny possible to man. May pollute the soul to utter corruption and destruction. The first class—the atheistic class—perused and believed, will. Spiritual and eternal death are the fruit of infidelity. All along the way of her effusions though that way ring with festive song and shine with gayety and beauty, lie souls wretched and lost. We may tremble for one whom we see perusing and endorsing such publications. He is inflicting upon himself a sting, imbibing a most deadly potion, for nothing more certainly damns than unbelief. It may amuse us to witness authors making sport of Christ and his cause. We may look on with relish. Shout applause to witticism and shrewd remark. But our position in so doing and the result outcoming to us, is very likely to resemble that of the Philistines, who gathered within and on the roof of the house that contained their God, Dagon, and from thence noticed the sport that was being made of Samson. Merriment will be turned into lamentation, ridicule into a seriousness eternally painful. Ah, what a thief that literary creation is, though encased in black and gold, with gilt trimmings and clear plain face, that steals from mortals an immortality of bliss and glory, to tongue at present unutterable, yea to mind inconceivable. And yet he finds favor with multitudes and lodgment in various homes.

ABUNDANCE OF WHOLESOME BOOKS.

The world is full of most excellent books. Books that cleanse thought and make it flow a clear, sweet and

healthy stream. Books that exalt and ennoble emotion ; that develop and intensify affection for what is good ; that endear life and instigate aspiration and desire for the best things to it belonging. Books that qualify for honorable positions, for mastery in chosen profession or pursuit ; that help render us equal to any burdens which mysterious providence may impose. Books that assist in making model parents and children and in adorning any domestic relation. Books that save from the evil imaginations of our own hearts, from the seductions of the flesh and the devil, from the allurements and enticements of the world, that induce a love of righteousness and a detestation of iniquity, that root out of the heart native weeds such as envy, malice, deceit and selfishness and plant in their stead good will and kindness, uprightness and charity. Books that soften asperities, a rough and heartless manner, and render gentle and amiable. That lift out of the bondage of evil habits into the glorious liberty of will, so that to an amazing extent a man may do the things his better judgment approves. Books that declare the Godhead and render apprehensible to soul the grander things of the other life, that incite mightily to their realization, imparting encouragement and a spirit of perseverance, that surmounts the obstacles that would exclude or prevent attainment to the ultimate and permanent possession of these—of God and Heaven. Such books there are. The blessed effects of which redeemed could tell, who through them as human instrumentality found their way to the skies.

All around us are persons ripe for the everlasting kingdom, whose golden hues have come in measure through the influence of such works. Read books of this kind. There need be no difficulty in discovering or choosing them, nor yet in owning them, since in this age of the world, they are published in many editions to suit the pecuniary circumstances of all people. They will not prove thieving, nor abstracting, but to all legitimate prosperity and success accessory. Read books of this description, you, who have been discarding or slighting them, and as mind grows and strengthens in the exercise, a conviction will seize upon you that it is not only waste but injury to read the other class and you will turn from them with as much aversion, as now with inclination you turn to them. And as you find your soul comfort increasing, your moral power enlarging, your nobler self developing to fuller manliness or womanliness under the instruction they impart, more competent to a part in life, more respected and regarded for opinion, you will come to them, to volumes of this wholesome character with eagerness and avidity. Oh, if we could only induce sincere trial of this, it would be as appetite with reference to many a table dish that is put before us, which looking upon we judge we would not like, which at first tasting we may not, but which appearing frequently and frequently tasted at last finds us with not only relish but craving for it.

THE BIBLE THE BEST. ASSISTS TO A HAPPY HOME.

One book already named in this chapter we desire to

especially commend. But for its existence and the best books published would never have been written. As in a single fountain many streams sometimes have origin, and would not but for the fountain be at all, so here. Too highly the Bible can not be spoken of. As Walter Scott said to an individual at his bed side when dying, who, being asked to read to him, inquired, from what book, *there is but one book*, so we repeat. It is the one book to all mortals indispensable. In whose stead no other book, nor thousands of books, unless its or their contents are a delineation, explanation, declaration of it, will answer. And scarcely can such be said to so do. No figures will designate its pecuniary value alone to mortals. In any profession or calling, the highest, the lowest, no work of letters will contribute to success and eminence equally with it. You doubt! Ask in the history of earth's most learned, most influential, most successful in loftiest sense, and see, if according both to their testimony and their life, it be not the truth. Nothing will more assist to the establishment, the preservation, the perpetuity of what this work is designed to help in attaining and keeping a home, a real home, typical of the sweet, everlasting home saints have in prospect. At the peril of peace and plenty, prosperity and purity for time—of tranquility and bliss for eternity—is its study neglected. God help us see the priceless opportunity the Holy Scriptures present to us.

Lamp of our feet, whereby we trace
Our path when wont to stray ;

Stream from the fount of heavenly grace;
Brook by the traveler's way.

Bread of our souls, whereon we feed;
True manna from on high,
Our guide and chart, wherein we read.
Of realms beyond the sky;

Pillar of fire through ages dark,
Or radiant cloud by day;
When waves would overwhelm our tossing bark.
Our anchor and our stay;

Pole star of life's tempestuous deep;
Beacon when doubts surround;
Compass, by which our course we keep,
Our deep sea lead, to sound;

Riches in poverty; our aid
In every needful hour;
Unshaken rock; the pilgrim's shade,
The soldier's fortress tower;

Our shield and buckler in the fight;
Victory's triumphant palm;
Comfort of grief; in weakness might;
In sickness, Gilead's balm;

Childhood's preceptor; manhood's trust;
Old age's firm ally;
Our hope when we go to dust,
Of immortality;

Pure oracles of truth divine;
Unlike each fabled dream
Given forth from Delphi's mystic shrine,
Or groves of Academe;

Words of the ever living God;
Will of His glorious son;
Without Thee, how could earth be trod,
Or heaven itself be won?



IV.

PROMISCUOUS AMUSEMENTS.

Passing with a companion along a leading thoroughfare of a busy city, with the inhabitants of which as also their judicial proceedings he was well acquainted, we were surprised to have him whisper to us, pointing to an individual directly in advance, "that man's a thief." Surprised because there was nothing in the exterior of the person designated to indicate any such predisposition or habit. Dressed very tastily, his movement steady and easy; his face or as much of it as we could catch, when he turned partially to street or window, placid and intelligent; his recognition of acquaintances graceful and bland; his salutations hearty; we would have formed of him, if so requested, a quite opposite opinion. And yet when we indicated our surprise, the gentleman with us, slackening his steps and retarding ours, mentioned his name, particulars of his various crimes, of trials sustained and penalties inflicted, and we knew from these, that the epithet applied, base as it was, expressed a naked fact, and so was deserved.

HOME THIEVES NOT SO ADJUDGED.

There are home thieves, which to such thief as described may be compared, there being nothing in the

outward, nothing at least to a hasty glance, or momentary looking, that reveals true inward character. One unacquainted with them would not so judge them, but incline to favorable, or at any rate not adverse opinion. And in many instances when such are declared thieves by those who have followed them, traced their workings, and know for a certainty whereof they affirm, the declaration is laughed at, or the accusation dismissed with an expression of incredulity—a charge of over-wariness, judgment unjustly entertained, and an intimation that until they are better convinced, they will not regard as a thief what has by those even who claim to have acquaintance with the matter, been so declared. “My eyes are as good as your eyes, my understanding is as clear, my estimate of a matter as accurate. I am no fool.” “I propose to countenance and continue on friendly and patronizing terms with what you deem a thief, a ruinous acquaintance, until I see the fact and danger for myself.” Sometimes too late for any safety or security, blinded eyes are opened, and confused and prejudiced understandings rendered fair and candid. Too late many men come to see themselves fools and confess, “that they might have known better.” “I could see no harm in a social glass of wine,” said a man prematurely gray, with sorrow all over his once handsome face, “no harm, until I laid my two and only sons in graves—died each in a fit of delirium tremens.”

Possibly there are no thieves in and of homes whose real character is so reluctantly credited, whose tolerance

accordingly is so tardily, unwillingly and hesitatingly ended, as that of "Promiscuous Amusements." The surroundings are so attractive; the scenery so grand; the colors so gorgeous; the words so sweet and thrilling, so enchanting and amusing; the lookers on largely so respectable, moving in first circles; that it is difficult to believe them harmful. And yet they are thieves, unmistakably such, with insatiable thirst for the best that man does or might possess.

AMUSEMENTS CONSIDERED THIEVING.

Now we do not include all amusements under the head of promiscuous. There are harmless amusements that give in wholesome returns all they cost. Profitable to body, heart and mind. Too frequently patronized they might prove thieving; but there is little danger of this. They are like harmless drinks. Little danger of a well man drinking too much lemonade, or healing water; or coffee or tea, for there is nothing in these that poisons appetite or creates a false and unquenchable thirst. So there is nothing in fine concerts, lectures, and choice readings, that corrupts good taste or creates a base appetite ever calling for more. That is likely to induce an outlay that means do not justify. That imperils character. There are amusements however, that are like alcoholic drinks, that disease body and mind, which a few times tasted or indulged may, and in a majority of cases do, instil a thirst for more. That grows with every indulgence until the thirst in its gratification sacrifices means, character, everything precious.

That in no way benefit or bless, and are consequently thieves. Such amusements are the general theatre, largely the opera, masquerades as usually conducted, public dances, and balls without disguise.

OPINIONS ENTERTAINED OF THEM BY GOOD MEN.

Knowing the reluctance with which many men, and of these morally good men, concede the truthfulness of this assertion, we desire before entering upon a specification of the character of theft perpetrated by them, to refer to the opinion entertained of them, by the best men of all times. It may assist in begetting a willingness, to be convinced of the justice of the charge we make concerning them.

How, then, have these things been regarded by the brightest luminaries, the wisest men on moral topics and the most upright in practice in all ages? By those who have stood at the head of all grand religious movements, whose influence has been felt in the renewal and reformation of many lives, and the general uplifting of society? Who have made the propriety of all questionable matters, the fruit or tendency of them, a careful study? Are they not all, all with scarcely an exception, of one mind with reference to these things? Do they not speak and write against them, and that with no bitterness toward those who conduct them or figure in them, but solely, often at their personal disadvantage in one way or another, moved by consideration of the good of communities. And the churches pious and exemplary laity, whose deportment is the fullest illus-

tration of Christian doctrine, who most powerfully convince of their identity with God, do they not stand side by side with Christian philosophers and scholars, teachers and divines, in warning against them? Mention is made by Rev. J. A. James, a most successful English divine, of a writer by the name of William Prynne, "who suffered many cruelties for his admiral productions in the days of Charles I., who made a catalogue of authorities against the stage, which contained every name of eminence in the then Christian world; it comprehended the united testimony of the Jewish and Christian churches; the deliberate acts of fifty-four ancient and modern, general, national, provincial councils and synods, both of the western and eastern churches; the condemnatory sentence of seventy-one ancient fathers, and one hundred and fifty modern Popish and Protestant authors; the hostile endeavors of philosophers and even poets; with the legislative enactments of a great number of Pagan and Christian states, nations, magistrates, emperors and princes." Even the more virtuous Pagans condemned this amusement. Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Solon, Cato, Seneca, Tacitus, the most venerable men of antiquity, the brightest constellation of virtue and talents which ever appeared on the hemisphere of philosophy, have all denounced the theatre and assure us that both Greece and Rome had their ruin accelerated by a fatal passion for these corrupting entertainments. Dr. John Styles, in a sermon of his delivered half a century ago arraigns

the theatre in this wise: "It makes virtue and vice convertible terms; it cherishes all the irascible and malignant passions; it is the very hot bed of sensuality; snares are laid for the eye, the ear, the imagination and the heart; the company, the spectators, the music, the sentiments, have all a simultaneous tendency; they seek to throw down the mounds of virtue and to lay waste the excellencies of human character." Another prominent writer of that time speaks of the theatre as the "puppet show of life, the school of vice, the vortex of debauchery, the stronghold of the God of this world, the vestibule of destruction." No change has transpired in the method of conducting it, or in the dramas presented, to make the yet more modern leaders of moral thought, speak or write of it differently. So public balls or fashionable receptions that combine the dance, are regarded by persons of the standing referred to. "They are anti-Christian," says an able writer, "on account of the intercourse which must be maintained with persons of light character and no religion; on account of their influence in raising and inflaming the passions; nor can anything be described more opposite to the spirit of Christianity; more incompatible with the duties which it requires, and the domestic order which is essential to a consistent profession of it, than midnight parties, where time and health are miserably wasted without the slightest compensation in return. The road to the kingdom of heaven lies not through the saloon of midnight frivolity and dissipa-

tion. There is the enchanted ground where those who wander lose their way and return no more." No less unfavorably have other religious lights of centuries past and present expressed themselves with reference to the public dance, or the dance between the sexes. "Cicero, in his defense of Murena, who was elected counsel of Rome and was charged by Cato with being a dancer, says, Cato calls Murena a dancer. If this reproach be true, it is a weighty accusation; if false, an outrageous calumny. For no one ever dances, who is not either drunk or mad. Dancing is always the last act of riotous banquets, gay places and profane pleasures." So much for ancient opinion. "No ingenuity can make dancing consistent with the covenant of baptism," writes Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont. "To my mind," says Bishop Meade, of Virginia, "it is in itself wrong, improper and of bad effect." "In regard to these waltzes, polkas and such like, a christian," says Dr. Howard Crosby, "ought not to hesitate an instant, any more than he should about thieving and lying. It is a fearful thing," he continues, "that fashion has so perverted the sense of christian parents, as to allow this enormity to be practised in their houses and by their own children." What a commentary upon this popular amusement and vice, is the assertion of the Chief of Police of New York, made several years ago, namely, "that three-fourths of the abandoned girls of that city were ruined through dancing." Remarking on this a writer in a religious weekly says, "Sex is the spirit of the dance, take it away, and

let the sexes dance separately, and it will soon go out of fashion." Bishop McIlvane puts the theatre and the dance together. And when we think how generally they who favor and patronize the one, favor and patronize the other, we must confess that not improperly are they linked. While great men so refer to and speak of these things, many of those persons who are inclined to think lightly of them, show their concurrence in these opinions to a marked extent, by the surprise they manifest when they hear of any man who claims to be a guide in morals, or an exemplifier of the christian religion, maintaining or defending them by word or act. Could these men, whose judgment as we have said and shown is so positively inimical to them, could these internal impressions so deeply imbedded be wrong? Is it in the least probable? No, no, these amusements are thieves—taking, taking and in no sense remunerating. Let us now specify the nature of the theft charged.

THEIR STEALINGS. MEANS.

Means. What a vast amount of it! We have no figures to indicate the sum. If we will only think of the number of such entertainments, nightly given in the various cities and towns of our land, and calculate the receipts from what we have known them to be in our own community; or if we will only recall the habits of the actors in these exhibitions, from what we have seen or learned, or what we may upon inquiry find out; the fortunes they have wasted or saved, we may have

an idea, remote to be sure, of the colossal sums thus expended. Expended, mark, to no real profit, otherwise we would not call them thieves. What wretchedness this would remedy! Ah, what wretchedness and misery save, which it directly induces! For the bulk of means thus expended comes not from the pockets of the rich. No, hundreds of rich men are largely so because they did not patronize such places in their poorer days. Hundreds are poor, because they are the patrons of every vice. You remember the burning years ago of the Brooklyn Theatre and the vast number that perished in its flames. The investigation that followed that conflagration showed that more than four-fifths of the auditors that night were parents of, or sons and daughters in destitute homes. The money they spent in being there really needed for the necessities of life. If we would look over the majority of audiences present at such amusements, we would find the masses such as really need to husband means. Poor persons. Persons owing grocery and tailor bills that ought to be paid. Young men who can ill afford in the light of an honorable and prosperous future to visit them. Several years ago a gentleman who is a coal merchant, told us that one winter night while at tea he was summoned to the door. An acquaintance, a hard-working laboring man wanted a half ton of coal until next pay day. Could he have it? The merchant hesitated, for poor men all over the neighborhood were creditors on his books. Finally, however, he said, "yes, I'll send it in the morn-

ing." Then having a desire to talk to him about some matter, he bade him, "come in awhile." The man answered, "I cannot, my wife is with me." Looking into the darkness, and noticing for the first the presence of his wife, the merchant said, "well, bring her in also, I wish to talk with you about an affair of importance." "Indeed I cannot to-night," was the answer. "Why?" "Well," answered the man, "we are on our way to the Opera House, we have reserved seats to hear Davenport." No money for coal, but two dollars, more than the price of the quantity engaged, for reserved seats to witness and hear a theatrical performance. So all over. Hundreds of poor men cannot pay their rent, cannot settle honest accounts, cannot attire themselves or families respectably. Why? Because they must, must in a mean sense, attend these amusements. Nine times out of ten, you will find those men who swindle landlords of their rent, and grocers of their dues, and tradesmen otherwise of the sum owing them, patrons of the opera house, theatre, saloon and so on. Wonderfully exacting where it exists, is a passion for these things. Consuming greatly needed means, sometimes last means. Years ago we read of a generous hearted man who with his wife was quite fond of the play-house and frequently attended. They had arranged to go on a certain night to some quite famous entertainment, but changed their minds on the morning of the day it was to be given, concluding that the sum it would require had better be donated to a poor and really suffering family next door.

We may imagine their surprise the following morning, upon hearing that these persons upon whom their charity was bestowed, took it and went to the theatre themselves. We have known persons to pay out the last money they had in hand for a ticket to a play, and in some cases where there was no ready money to borrow the price of admission from a companion or neighbor. O the poverty, and with it the dishonesty these things induce !

SYMPATHY.

They steal sympathy. Sympathy from countless indigent persons. Even where the patronage on the part of such is slight, amounting to a small sum a year, the knowledge of the fact shuts up fellow-bowels of mercy. Persons to whom appeals are made to help needy ones, who are recognized or known as having patronized such places in former times, usually answer negatively, or if they bestow help it is with remarks like this, "If they had remained away from the theatre or show, that did them no profit, when they had a little means they would possibly not now need to ask assistance." Yes, it kills compassion that would otherwise be felt or shown. Compassion, which tempers every sort of distress, is light upon any cloud. It mitigates against benevolence. Even men who patronize the places we are speaking of themselves, frequently answer such applications for relief, in this wise, "I will not give—they might have remained away from amusement halls," thus condemning these resorts by mouth as a needless

and profitless expense. Even if years have intervened the time when entreaty for help is submitted, and when these amusements were supported, yet is there in many cases, where remembered, reference made thereto and diminished help afforded. We cannot—it is not in human nature—to feel for poor who have in questionable ways and methods made themselves so, as we do for those who are poor, despite thriftiness and economy.

HEALTH.

They steal or injure health. This is not likely to be disputed with reference to the ball or promiscuous dance. Acquaintance with, or knowledge of such results as respects this exercise is too common. The names of persons are readily recalled, who, from the light apparel worn at the dance, the hot room, the over taxing of strength, the perspiration and exposure to sudden cold, the absorption of the poisons contained in masks, in the case of masquerades, were taken fatally ill or were permanently injured in health. Far from rare are cases of this kind. Familiar, very familiar, to every physician's and clergyman's experience. Some most painful cases, where ruined health was bemoaned for long years with bitterest tears, where inevitable death was shrunk from and attendants vainly implored to help and save. It may be disputed, however, when charged of other amusements, where active participation is not had; where attendants are only spectators, and yet here it is likewise true. It may not be so rap-

idly stolen or injured—not lost or harmed in a night or season. Not in every case, but in a countless array of instances. Not at once perceptibly, nevertheless surely. This, or else every hygienic treatise we have ever seen or studied argues illogically, and forms conclusions erroneous. Like the masquerade and dance, the theatre and opera keep out of rest until eleven to twelve o'clock at night, and send home in a state of excitement that renders sleep for an hour or more next to impossible. If work is to be done next day, the individual must go to it improperly refreshed or strengthened, and to complete it, draw upon reserved forces, and so is health unmistakably impaired. In a multitude of cases, scores we may say, a visit to the bar and restaurant follows the play, and its drink and lunch before retiring, which adds to the danger the lateness itself occasions. So extensive is this habit, so liberal the patronage that proceeds from it, that you seldom see an amusement resort that you do not see a drinking establishment near. And this strengthens objection to the theatre, makes the danger greater, the fact that keeping up until hunger and thirst are keenly experienced, the temptation to gratify these same, in these only available places, is, in countless instances, especially of the young, yielded to, and so entrance to them made and thus habits of drink that end in intemperance or drunkenness, acquired. To be further fleeced of means and still more injured, in body, mind and heart, the first of these thieves nightly throws hundreds and thou-

sands of his victims into the hands of the second. Do you not so discern it?

MODESTY.

They steal or destroy modesty. We submit this point with little argument. Take the patrons of these places and this charge we make side by side, examine honestly and see if it is not true. Are not the liberties taken and allowed in the dance, liberties that under other circumstances would be considered improper; the character of dresses worn, dresses that ladies going elsewhere would not attire themselves in from a pure sense of decency, calculated to so effect? Then the half nudities of the stage, with the vulgarisms there heard and improprieties there seen, can they reasonably be expected to result otherwise. So fearfully do the theatre and opera embolden, that at last men and women are found listening unblushingly to plays that once would have so wounded modesty as to have evoked tears and anger. And this is less and less wonderful as one inquires into the character of the drama for the most part rendered and the opera for the most part sung, both being fictitious portraiture of worst things happening in society.

MORAL INFLUENCE.

They steal moral influence. This is something that men only have as they abstain from all ungodliness. One bad habit diminishes its power vastly. Even a habit some men say they can see no harm in. Take the Sunday-school teacher who attends the theatre or

takes a hand in the whirling dance, and the one that remains strictly away from these, which of the two, all other things equal, has the more decided influence for good upon his pupils? Take men in the church, one a patron of amusement halls the other a non-supporter, and which is the more respected—the more willingly hearkened to, and allowed to lead the congregation? Of the two which do we believe further from hypocrisy, or the religion of which, are we the quicker to regard sincere? The answer to these questions is known. The patrons of these places, when they teach or talk, are not regarded by those acquainted with them, as in their heart believing the doctrines they profess. Serious doubts are entertained (and not without strongest scriptural reason,) of the spiritual renewal of such persons. None of us would want such a man to minister to us from the pulpit, or give us the comfort of prayer in a dying hour. No, no! there is not a man but who knows, that to wait upon the places we are speaking of, only irregularly, once in a great while, neutralizes moral influence over others. Non-conformity to the world, an acceptance of the declaration, “my kingdom is not of this world,” (with the intimation or inference that may be properly deduced from it, namely, that those who belong to this kingdom, are not to act as those who have not been born into it,) is essential to genuine influence for good. This gave apostles power. This has in all ages given good men their influence. Even in the proper training of children as mere moral-

ists count propriety, those parents are at a disadvantage who attend these places. We imagine, that a precocious child, lectured on the danger of keeping late hours ; on wasteful expenditure of money ; and a dozen other follies and mistakes of childhood and youth ; would be able to answer a theatre, a minstrel or ball going parent, in a way that would convince him, that with such example before a child, precept upon him has little weight.

RELISH FOR HEALTHIER EXERCISES.

They destroy or steal a relish for healthier exercises. Precisely as trashy reading creates a relish for literature of that kind, and a disrelish for what is of more substantial character, so this causes with a fondness for its own, an aversion for what is opposite. What appeals to the judgment, understanding and conscience of men. To persons who frequent the theatre, the church becomes an unattractive resort. Worship is uninteresting. Sermons are dry, especially if they are plain, practical, or full of doctrinal truth. Ministers who are clownish, and sermons that abound with wit and nonsense, may be entertaining to hearers who are wont to attend upon the amusements of the day, but ministers and sermons otherwise are not likely to be. Church going comes to be a mere form, the hour or half hour is impatiently sat through, with many a felt and frequently expressed wish, that the services were completed. What opinion are we constrained to have of those literary entertainments and pleasures of the world that turn mind and heart from engagements of divine appointment ?

Further, they steal or kill spiritual life. If what has been asserted is admitted, and there can be no successful refutation of it, this follows as a consequence. The higher life of the soul is nourished by divine truth. This not only originates but promotes spiritual life. Nothing else does or can. The latter always exists in the ratio in which the former is appropriated by the soul. That accordingly which causes a disrelish for the truth of God indirectly destroys soul life. The logic is plain as can be. Experience and fact bear it out. Men who have patronized these things will tell you that as their interest in them increased, their concern for holy things declined. If we look around us, we will find the truth of it verified in many lives.

Is this the most, the summary of what can be justly said against the thieves whose character and work we are considering? Is this all they take from those who yield themselves into their hands? When their devotees have surrendered means, sympathy, health, influence, correct taste, spiritual life, to them, do they leave them? Is this the witness of the end of those who play back of the footlights, or of those who sit before them? Alas, alas, robbing them to this extent, they leave them with unpreparedness for the immortal life, the heart not weaned from the world, not wooed and won by the Lord. No rejoicings induced by spiritual triumphs distinguish the close of a life thus characterized. No assurances that having suffered denial, there shall ever after be kingly abundance. No peace in a review of the past or

in a contemplation of the future. Oh no, these delightful emotions, infinitely more precious than any carnal or sensual feelings, and hence preferable to them, do not mark the dying hours of the lovers of the pleasures of this world. We would all be surprised, without reference to inward state, to be told that a habitue of these places, one who has suffered the deprivations mentioned, had died a victorious death, rejoicing in the excellent glory of God. Ah, we would not credit such a statement. The end of the broad way of sensual pleasure is not eternal life, but eternal death. A man may say "I consent to that general position. I believe that frequent attendance upon the theatre, the opera, minstrelsy and the ball room, is stealing of means, health, influence, spiritual life and even a happy eternity, but going sometimes, now and then, on the choicer occasions, can certainly not be harmful in the respects stated." That *may* be. However, many a man who started out with this idea, found himself in the course of years a quite frequent patron of these things, and a loser in every particular we have specified, beyond what for time and eternity he could safely afford. This view of them accordingly is perilous, as there is no telling in what cases the effect may be as last noted. Besides our honest, deliberate conviction is, that no man can go once to these places without diminishing his moral influence for a long time to come. Then there is this consideration, that makes such position with regard to these matters untenable on the part of those who are conscientious

and desire to do right, namely, though they should go seldom, that seldom going encourages those who constantly attend. Encourages innocent ones to give them patronage and audience, who never previously have, and who having confidence in these persons, judge the thing safe. Thus good, upright people may help, and mightily too, these fearful thieves to consummate in other hearts the whole of their work, though in their own, they restrain them. Vain, vain is the search for argument justifying in the light of gospel truth, of conscience, the pleasurable ways mentioned. At very best any approval shown them is patronage to a thief.

TREATMENT COUNSELED.

Quit them, you, who regularly, you also who irregularly attend them. You can be as happy, and even happier away from, as in them, and far more contented. To discontentedness they in measure, greater or less conduce. Great comfort in home, in body and mind can be had with what they cost. The works of the finest poets, dramatists, scholars, can be procured for the money thus expended, and tragedy and comedy read, to greater mental advantage than they can be seen enacted. Quit them for your own sake, the sake of your family, the sake of companions who are influenced by your example, for the sake of mankind in general, whose happiness for time and eternity they imperil. As you value the conviction of living to a blessed purpose—as you desire to leave a memory that in the hearts of children shall prove sanctifying—as you dread contributing to a deep-

ening and enlarging of the stream of evil that coursing through our world, blights and devastates and damns—quit these things. You, young man, with a future before you, that right living will render prosperous and influential. You, young woman, who by remaining away will be example and safe guard to brother and friend, and preserve them both in the confidence and respect of employer and community at large. You especially whatever your sex, age and occupation, may be, who call yourself after Christ, and profess to sustain covenant relation to him, who by inconsistency is dishonored, with whose spirit and cause these pleasures are incompatible. Oh quit them, not the worst, but all of them, and seek your enjoyments higher. In those things that hide not God's reconciled countenance from us, that cause him not to withdraw his spirit and peace from our hearts, but give them in richer, fuller abundance to us.





V.

THE GAMING TABLE.

The thief to which we now entreat attention is one whose character and reputation as such is universally so accredited. A thief whose very name sends a shudder upon all who are wholly free of his clutches, so is he dreaded. Into whose power few come, who have not fallen into the hands of one or more of the thieves already mentioned.

PLACE AND TIME OF HIS OPERATIONS.

The principal place of his operations is in cellars or underground establishments, in the back or more secluded rooms of the lowest order of hotels and restaurants, or in buildings purposely erected for the furtherance of his designs, known as mysterious places, well shuttered and blinded, to which access is had with difficulty; secret keys, passwords, and peculiar raps gaining entrance. As here conducted his surroundings are well nigh invariably liquor, tobacco, profanity, fraud and quite often licentiousness and murder. His *branch establishments* are restaurants and hotels of somewhat better standing than these referred to, often bar rooms and lighted halls into which any one may look, the proprietors of which would feel very indignant indeed

to be charged as conducting a place in the interest, or in such measure as to further the interest and work of this thief. The *time of his operations* in these latter places is the early night, though he *may* do something during the day. In the former, it is all the night and every night of the year, unless the law or a special providence interpose.

VICTIMS.

The victims are all men. Largely young men in the milder of the places referred to; all men and usually older men in the other. There are exceptional resorts, we believe, where fallen women take a part in the arts of this thief, but no woman who claims respectability, from whose heart feelings of shame have not departed, is willing to be seen in any of them, unless upon a pressing errand, or through direst necessity. Even the women of the world, whose leading thoughts are enjoyment, who feast appetite for wine to a degree that partially unsettles reason, who visit the theatre boldly and patronize minstrelsy and the ball room; even these women, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, destitute of real christianity, lacking the finer sensibilities, either unequal or unwilling to the sharper discriminations between right and wrong, yes even such women stand away from and manifest dread at the very mention of this thief—THE GAMING TABLE. Subject to any other thief or all the thieves we have designated, even greatly so, an individual may retain some sort of standing in society. In fact unless very immoderately subject to

the first, he suffers little, if at all, in the eyes of the fashionable world through the others named. But the patron or victim of this thief suffers in the estimation of all who have not fallen as low as himself. We announce concerning a man "he is a regular or confirmed gambler," and you at once conclude that he is a drinker, swearer, liar, thief, if necessary a perjurer. Not that every gambler is all these, but because the representative gambler is such. Hence no wonder that people, even immoral, worldly people, shrink from him.

NATURE OF THEFT. MONEY, HONOR, LIFE.

The character of his theft is very similar to that of his confederates, whose work we have previously noticed. Money is the great object. That he gets it, is evident from the time he has conducted his operations and the manner in which he has extended them. Through centuries of years he has robbed individuals, communities and nations. To day in all lands he is gathering legitimate earnings and inherited fortunes, with possessions that were fraudulently gotten. What poor has he not, what poor does he not further fleece! How many once well off has he stripped of well nigh everything! How many rich reduced to moderate means! Temporarily some of his patrons may win or gain, but at length all or nearly all lose. He plays the same game with them as a class, that the more expert play with those less skillful, namely, allows them to win in the beginning that in the end the greater plunder may be secured. The money goes ultimately for the costly drinks that

are furnished ; the feasts that are set ; the crimes committed and penalties enacted through him as cause ; for rent, light and fuel. Ah, if the sum of means thus expended to no profit whatsoever, aye worse than sunken in the sea, jeopardizing as it does remaining means, injuring the agencies by which accumulated ; if this sum of means, added to what the time and strength spent in his service would in respectable pursuits produce, could go to feed and clothe, educate in skilled and useful labor, in morally improving and christianizing the community, what sights of wretchedness that do not have their cause in this sin could be made to disappear, what sights so made would not exist !

He steals honor. Possibly you may think that there is a barrenness of this excellence in the case of the man who gets as far down morally as the gaming table. We answer judging from confessions read, not always. There are persons who come into the hands of this monster, with no trust whatever violated. Guilty of much else that is wrong they are yet guiltless of using the property of another ; of making false entries upon books they are keeping ; of forging names. Before they made his acquaintance any of these crimes would have seemed impossible to them. They could take a social glass without any compunction of conscience ; could read vile books and indulge vile talk ; could attend theatre ; could dance without a thought of harm ; but rob an orphan, or ward, or bank, or swindle an employer, never.

But how long, how long do hundreds keep the company of the thief we are speaking of, before they have done what they thought far beneath them. In the confessions of arrested forgers, defaulters, we see it all. Let no man think that he can do deference to this consumer of means, this destroyer of reputation, this bold, bad monster for any time and maintain fidelity to trusts confided to his keeping. He will learn trickery and cheating at once, and as soon as means owned are gone, he will find himself not proof against the voice that says, "loan yourself some of the money in your care and pay it back when you win." So he will secretly loan and publicly lose as thousands of others have done and stand far sooner than he expects with integrity and honor forever blighted and gone.

Beyond this he steals life. The life of the body and the spirit. Suicide after suicide is chronicled by the daily papers, murder after murder recorded. Need we assert that a large portion of these are directly or indirectly occasioned by the gaming table. In numerous instances great losses drive to madness, and in that condition victims lay violent hands upon themselves—send a bullet to brain or heart or drain a poisonous potion—cast themselves into the deep, or suspend themselves from tree or rafter. In other cases mind maintains its balance. Not the inconveniences sure to attend the loss, nor the disgrace destined to be incurred, nor the penalty certain to be inflicted where another's means have been wasted disturbs the equilibrium. Anger is

the feeling that is aroused. It intensifies as the reflection is indulged that the winner of the wager or stakes has no just right to them. A plan is laid to repossess what has been lost. That plan involves the winner's life and the life when opportunity affords is taken. How many, many men for the winning of golden treasures at the gaming table have had to die. Another way has death been caused by this thief. Untold numbers of good, upright citizens have been waylaid, robbed and murdered, that means to carry on gambling practices might be secured. The same motive causes burglary of bank and private residence. We seldom find one of these street robbers, these destroyers of life, these house breakers who is not an adept in the use of cards and a constant patron of gambling hells.

MAIN INSTRUMENT BY WHICH ACCOMPLISHED.

But why argue the theft of the gaming table. There is ready consent to all that we have said and more. All candid persons agree that here almost everything precious in either a worldly or spiritual sense is lost. We can say little against this thief to which the reader would take exception. We turn away accordingly from a consideration of his work to discourse of the way by which he is assisted and kept in power. You may be surprised to hear us charge, that many persons belonging to various communities, who justly count themselves highly respectable, aye, even christian, contribute to this. Is it asked how? We answer by

their countenance of the instrument by which his horrid thieving is conducted—*Cards*.

IS PLAYING FOR AMUSEMENT HARMFUL?

“But do you mean to say that there is any harm in a game of cards for mere pastime, for amusement sake only? *I* do not think there is.” So has the denunciation of card playing been met time and again by individuals given thereto. Often in a tone of voice that indicated that the person addressing the remark was half insulted or provoked at the very insinuation of harm. To any who may honestly propound the question, we ask attention to a number of very plausible reflections which ought to satisfactorily answer it.

How many persons do you suppose who regularly visit the gaming table and play in earnest, that is for a wager, learned first to handle cards in sport in the home circle? Do you think there are none? Or do you regard the number quite small? What is your opinion candidly as to this? Whatever it may be we are sure and many others who condemn card playing for sport are sure, that there are multitudes of individuals expert in the use of cards, seeking gain in their handling, who if a confession could be gotten out of them would say, “the first game I ever played was in my own or a neighbor’s home, with my mother, sister, brother, or with a friend and companion. Here I learned to distinguish them one from another, here my fondness for the game was first acquired.” Or to put the matter in another light. Suppose that thirty years ago every deck of cards

had been expunged from the homes, the respectable homes in which in all this time they have been kept; the children taught that card playing was improper; informed as to the dreadful evil associated with the game; suppose no mother that has sanctioned it all this time had so done, what according to your idea would have been the result? Do you believe there would be as many gamblers as there are? Do you think there would be half as many? Again, do you not believe that the knowledge of the fact, that very moral and respectable people play cards for fun, encourages young men to learn the game. In saloons, because a more convenient or better place does not offer in their cases; and though playing for mere amusement at first, yet afterward becoming skillful and having great fondness for the sport, to play it when bantered, or when none can be found to play it otherwise, in earnest? Further do you not believe, that to many a man learning the game in this way, and finding himself exceeding "lucky," the temptation to amass a large sum of money easily, is more than he can resist, and so yielding he becomes a gambler ere he knows it? Is not the last act the result of the first. Would the last ever have been done if the first had not? Now we submit these inquiries to those who look approvingly upon parlor card playing. We ask them to follow this line of thought in their consideration of its propriety, and bearing in mind the dreadful things that are associated with it in its worst forms, to answer whether it is right, right before God, seeing to

what danger it exposes, to have anything to do with cards at all.

GAMBLERS, AS LONG AS VIEWED WITH FAVOR.

This can be assured. That so long as the present opinion of this thing obtains—so long as mothers say, “I can see no harm in it” and so allow their sons to pass evening hours; so long as daughters speak in the same strain to gentlemen who pay them their addresses, or honor them with calls; so long will there be sons that are gamblers and husbands also. And if any of these who so express themselves are called to taste, only the bitterness of having son or husband known as a man of this stamp, let alone the bitterness which his manner of life may occasion, let it be considered that they are only reaping what they sowed. In thousands of families the fruits of this false position do not immediately appear. Education, refinement, culture and family pride prevent. But the fruit does appear at last in generations that succeed and at once in families or among acquaintances where these restraining influences do not exist. You may play and no harm comes to you because you have moral culture, pure taste, and conscientious opinions that keep you within bound, but he whom you teach or who takes courage from your example, has none of these preserving powers and goes off into the extremes of the vice and to virtue and goodness is lost. We ought all to love our race enough to discard a game that exposes to such danger.

We regret the truthfulness of what we are now about

to affirm. We say it with pain, yet say it in the hope of achieving some good. Exemplary as many of the gentler sex are; precious as has been the influence of multitudes of them, purifying, saving, in spiritual things prospering; noble as is woman's mission in the light of adaptability and grandly as she has in thousands of instances fulfilled it, she has nevertheless done very much to ruin man. In every town and city of this bright land and other lands, she is doing to-day what Eve did with Adam in the garden six thousand years ago, leading him to a violation of divine precept and thus from God. An agent in satan's hands accomplishing by the sweetness of her face, the vivacity of her manner and the charm of her expression in many cases, what no man could accomplish. Hundreds of young men who could and did say no to the sparkling glass when it was offered them by companions, consented to take and drink when importuned and bantered by a lady, for whom friendship was cherished that was ripening to love. As many more who could not be coaxed by associates to neglect the duties of business or profession for sensual enjoyments and spend in their patronage what for their own advancement they should have saved and wanted to, have been led to do this through hints, intimations and remarks of ladies they highly esteemed. As many more who never could have been induced by a comrade to a game of cards, because of an aversion felt toward them through a partial knowledge of their principal use received at a mothers' side or under the instruction of a

pious teacher or pastor, have been led to yield impression, to embrace the temptation through the wish of a lady held in high regard. "Will you drink to my health, Mr.—?" "Or come, have a glass, it won't hurt you." "Do you attend theatre? I love tragedy and comedy and never refuse an invitation to go." "Do you not think it is a delightful way to pass an evening? I refer to the sociable—the music and dancing are very fine." Remarks like these or looks and actions that conveyed as much, made directly to gentlemen, or intentionally in their presence, by artful and bewitching women, were the fatal trap, the matter that first led astray, many, not comparatively, but in the aggregate who now toil at solitary prison confinement, who throng the saloons of the land drinking to violence and stupefaction, who weigh in sorrow to the grave the head and heart of parents, and crush joy and hope out of the heart of wives, and mirth and happiness from the soul of little children. And it does not alter the fact to speak of the weakness of man, to laughingly allude to what he is represented as claiming for or calling himself, "the Lords of Creation." To say jestingly, "talk of the stronger sex when weak woman can so influence him or pervert his way." No, no. It is too serious a fact to be met in this manner. Ah, too serious we will feel it, if ever in the providence of God, in the shape of husband or child it comes home to us. We know that society does not expect a man to say no to a woman, though he might wish to do so. That he is expected to cater to

her wishes and tastes and please her in every possible way. That he is stigmatized, slighted and unkindly spoken of if he does not. Ah, woman, you know all this and the advantage it gives you over him.

WHAT WOMAN MIGHT DO.

Oh, if with the fascination there is about a sprightly woman; brilliant or merely moderately so; whose manners are refined, whose address is smiling and courteous; if with the advantage such an one has over man because of his admiration for her and his desire, if a gentleman, to be obliging and in every possible way consent to her wishes and please her; if with these she sought to win from these habits and resorts; if she said pleadingly to the young man who has only recently encountered the tempting glass, "Don't drink, Edward, don't touch it, promise me you won't;" if her voice was "I wouldn't go to the theatre, Charles, you are only starting in life, your employer will think better of you if you do not, save that money for entrance upon life for yourself or provide yourself with some lasting comfort, we will spend the evening at home reading an interesting and instructive author;" if her position was, "no, I do not play cards, I shall never handle what has produced so much misery and woe." If she acted thus, spoke thus, what a delivering, saving angel, she would be. How many young men who have already started on the downward way would she save! What hearts full of painful anxiety would she relieve! What fears dispel! What hopes implant and foster! What foundations of

usefulness, of strong manly character, of honorable success would she lay! Blessed be God there have been such women, such mothers, such daughters, and there are such now. We have met men ourself who from obscurity rose to position; from no means of consequence to means adequate to generous living, who, pointing to their wives have said, "she saved me." "I was a worthless fellow, given to a fast life 'till I made her acquaintance." Ah, there are many men, upright, noble, grand, and they owe it all under God to a true and splendid woman. Oh, what in the eyes of God must such a being be! What reward waits her on the other shore. Society may amuse itself at her oddity, her old fogysm, her strictness, but angels are holding glory's crown for her perpetual adornment and Christ waits to greet with welcome to blessedness perennial and endless. Oh, woman, will you not choose to save and elevate the young men over whom your influence reaches?

GAMES LESS DANGEROUS.

"But if there is harm in playing cards for amusement, then there is harm in playing any social game, for there is no game but can be employed for gambling purposes." This is the remark uttered with a sort of triumph, with which a declaration against the use of cards for sport, is met. Is it, true or false, an argument against the position we have taken? Surely not at all. In the first place, there is not the harm in other social games that there is in this, nor can there be. They do not fascinate to the same extent and a fondness acquired for

them exposes to no such danger. Strong passion for cards often runs its victim for gratification into the lowest haunts of vice, but strong passion for other plays does not, for they are not the games in vogue in such resorts, and so gratification there would be impossible. Though these other games might be used for gambling purposes, yet are they not once in a thousand times. Hundreds upon hundreds are expert in playing chess for instance, but how few gamble in the use of this game. Hundreds upon hundreds are expert in the use of cards, but how many gamble with these? If chess were universally put aside and no longer played in any shape, the number of gamblers would scarcely be diminished. But if cards were put away what a decrease would there be. Further in the playing of other games no encouragement is given to young men to play cards which is the game in fashion in the lower saloons and gambling hells; while in the playing of cards for mere sport in the parlor there is as we have seen encouragement to play in these places, no discrimination of surroundings being made, and playing for fun the temptation to play in earnest becomes in many instances irresistible. Moreover, different other games are not games of chance as is this, but of skill, and do not admit of the trickery, the cheating, the secret marks, the slight of hand performances this does. The same temptation to dishonesty is not present in the one as in the other.

There is one thing that almost compels me to discredit the sincerity of persons, who claim that there is

no more harm in playing cards than in playing another game—that they are all equally right or equally wrong. It is this fact, that when any individual for whom they have great respect, in whose christian character they have undoubted faith, comes suddenly upon them in the midst of their play, they shuffle the cards from sight with a rapidity that is marvellous, and a confused look seizes them. This is always the case where conscience has not been seared and life is comparatively innocent. Why, we ask? Ah there is a consciousness of wrong here, that is not felt in the indulgence of other games. The reader may have read or heard the story of the priest who advocated the harmlessness of a game of cards for fun. Playing one day with a fellow priest until the bell had ceased ringing for prayers, he had time only to slip the cards into the pocket of his robe. Engaged in the service he forgot about the cards, and having occasion to use his handkerchief, he drew the deck out with it, and in profusion they lay on the floor about him. Momentarily embarrassed, his wits came to his rescue. Service finished he said to the amazed congregation, “you see these cards. I brought them with me to prove to you how much better your children are acquainted with worldly games than with their prayers.” Then calling a boy to his side, he requested him to pick up and name successively the cards as he handed them to him. The boy was equal to the emergency. The priest made his point, and saved his reputation, the congregation being satisfied with the explanation. If

however, he had candidly esteemed the playing harmless and unobjectionable, there would have been no necessity for prevarication, nor extrication at the hands of an apt boy. Men will hardly pretend falsely to relieve themselves of an innocent embarrassment.

ANY, LIKE PERILOUS SHOULD BE ABSTAINED FROM.

But in the second place, if other games are equally evil with cards that would not by any means excuse or make this game right, but only render important the abandonment and denunciation of the others likewise. One wrong does not justify another, however much we may seek to have it do so. Nor is any game the *moral* rightfulness of which is questionable, necessary to the comfort, the happiness, the domestic or social pleasure of any body. The happiest lives of which record is made witness to this; the freest, happiest souls of to-day, clearest of remorseful reflections, attest the same thing. God who made the world so beautiful and endowed us in such varied measure, all for our comfort, discovers to the soul that wishes, many harmless and profitable ways of delightful entertainment. Away then with the idea that anything fraught with evil, anything that imperils in any sense, is essential to real enjoyment. It is a position no logic compels; a position as we have intimated, observation and experience not only refuse to confirm but emphatically deny. Happy, says David, in the sense of pre-eminence happy, is that people whose God is the Lord. And that people are not those who seek their bliss in worldly pleasures of acknowledged

questionable rightfulness, but who cheerfully surrender the mass of even its harmless pleasures for fuller draughts of joy from the wells of salvation.

LITTLE HOPE OF PROPER OPINION.

And now this is all we shall present upon this subject. Shall what has been presented be to any desired purpose? How we wish our fears were less our hopes more. How hard as a rule it is to persuade against that for which a fondness is cherished. Men will not believe, not generally, that there is danger in what affords gratification. Even God's word was not credited, that death lay in the taking of the fruit, that pleasant to eye and desirable to heart, was yet forbidden. One comfort however remains to him who expresses his sincere conviction, and dares to call out against what he believes for man's best interests in time and eternity wrong, and that comfort is duty done. Whitefield expressed it very happily when having rebuked, to apparently no purpose, a number of men for profanity and his secretary challenged "what good did it do?" he answered "it gives me a soft pillow."

OUTCOME OF SUBMISSION OF THE QUESTION TO THE

ALMIGHTY.

But then we may be addressing a few wont to indulge this sport and long accustomed to regard it harmless, who really desire to do right. "Sorry I should be," you say, "to contribute by my endorsement of any game to the ruin of any mother's son, of any son destined some day to be the husband of a loving wife, or the father of trusting children. Sorry to

help on even slightly the ruinous work of Satan, so dreadful and lamentable as it is. Sorry to hinder in the least the saving mission of my dear redeemer in the soul of the unrenewed. No, no. Not to the extent of a finger's weight do I wish to help keep any heart closed to his patient waiting and knocking for entrance. If this pleasure is wrong; not in itself, but in its leadings; if it militates in this direction, I want to surrender it and turn my back on it forever." Is that what you say? And are you not convinced by what has been said that it is improper? Do you long for further light, then we exhort, that you do as St. James advises. Ask wisdom of God "who giveth liberally and upbraideth not;" wisdom or enlightenment upon this matter. Settle it in this way, for in this way settled, it is likely to remain settled forever.

I can imagine one in such a strait as this, enjoying the sport, but wanting to quit it if not wholly right, passing through a season of earnest prayer for light and guidance. I see him as he rises from his knees the struggle over. What marked serenity of face! How calmly bright and peaceful! Nature is not more charming when a storm having passed over it, the sun shines forth from clear and placid sky, upon grassy fields and trees in leaves and blossoms. I hear him talk. The voice is low but firm, a tinge of regret and sadness in it, as if a new revelation had been received, a ray of divine light imparted, that had not previously illumined his soul, which had it, he would have ordered his walk be-

fore God more circumspectly. "I will give it up," he says, "it does not help me in my growth in grace, it may hinder. It does no one good, it may do harm. It will relieve of all anxiety as to this, and rendering my life more conformable to the example of Christ, will heighten my religious influence. Doing it for Christ's sake I shall suffer no loss of pure enjoyment." I say, I see, I hear this all, as the result of faithful importunity. More than this, I witness such conclusion and determination followed by heavenly ministries, the invariable consequence of a period of trial and temptation when the issue is on God's side—heavenly ministries more than compensating, sweetly, inexpressibly sweetly contenting the soul with the surrender and decision made. I watch the life that opens to such a purpose, and more and more lustrous it grows as down time's aisles to the eternal gateways it makes progress. I listen if perchance one sentiment of regret at abandonment made comes back, but no, no. Tones of merriment and cheer reach my ear, but they are not tones inspired by worldly pleasure. They are deeper, fuller, richer and more constant. Long after the laughter of the patrons of unchristian pleasures has ceased to be heard, when the festive shouts of worldings have through sickness and approaching death given way to ejaculations and moanings of remorse, these hallowed sounds, sounds of soul literally bathed in bliss will come back. I hear them until the turn in life is made, death's floods are crossed and heaven's gates entered. And though

from thence no sound comes back to me, I know that He who here puts joy and rejoicing in the heart and lips of the self-denying, will there fill the sanctified soul with an ecstasy and rapture that shall wake a song of praise of entrancing melody. Fullness of joy, the portion of those who bear the cross of Christ, who nail lust and sensuality thereto, in what cadence will it assert itself! Content I would be to have every matter whose propriety is questionable settled at the altar of prayer. Wonderful changes in the general demeanor of professed followers of Christ would an honest appeal of that sort induce.





VI.

EXTRA VAGANT DRESS AND DIET.

Years ago during a delightful vacation at a summer resort it was our privilege to listen to what we considered an admirable address on the subject of intemperance, delivered by a lady whose soul seemed powerfully enlisted in the work of liquor reform. The argument was strong, the description of the ruinous results of this vice graphic, the anecdotes and illustrations moving, the exhortations and appeals fervent and really eloquent. It visibly affected a large portion of the audience and we doubt not accomplished measurably the end at which directed. If it did not reclaim drinking persons who may have heard it, or put a stay upon their cups, it did, we question not, occasion renewed determination on the part of those present, who were already arrayed in sentiment and feeling against this monster vice, to continue to toil and pray yet more trustingly and persistently for its complete overthrow. For where excellent addresses of moral character immediately effect no more, they do effect this.

INFLUENCE INJURED.

There was one thing that we thought seriously militated against the speech, diminished its inherent strength,

and prevented its strong and impassioned sentences producing the full result they were otherwise calculated to bring about, and that one thing was, *her extravagance of attire*. Arrayed as she was in most costly garments, elaborately decked with jewels new and rich in design, and in formation most precious, we could not other than regard her address and her dress, very incongruous indeed. So did this opinion possess us, that during some of her warmest utterances, there arose involuntarily within us feelings of disgust. Our conviction was, that one who was so devoted to the cause of temperance in one direction, who had no tolerance whatever for him who directly or indirectly supported drink, who urged temperance even to the discarding of wine where judgment well impressed and directed sees fit to employ it, our conviction we repeat was, that one so radical in view on the topic as this, ought to be decently temperate in apparel. Nor could we help entertaining the reflection then, that had often occurred to our mind before, that in things for which persons have no desire they are apt to see tremendous wrong, while in things for which they have a fondness, they are wont to discover no harm even when tolerated to excess. Nor could we keep out of mind what the Saviour says, about seeing a mote in a brother's eye, while we fail to perceive a beam in our own. Not that extravagant dress is in itself a vice at all comparable with habits of drink, or by any means as grievous or dreadful a fault, but that in one who advocates reform it is, in the light of the influence

it has, the offence it creates, an impropriety, a vice. And this is one of the things that has always obstructed the onward march of temperance as respects drink, the intemperance of so many of its advocates in so many things if not equally or even approximately wrong, still wrong, inconsistent according to the judgement of the purest in heart and the most sincere and deliberate in opinion.

TRUE VIEW.

However individuals may regard extravagance in dress or diet, as improper scripturally as plain mannered Quakers, or as proper in the same sense as the most worldly conformed christians of other names, this to our mind seems the correct view. That so far as it can be indulged or practiced without any robbery of God in any direction, any robbery of self, of health and mental vigor; any robbery of fellow-men, by oppressive, usurious and fraudulent dealings, or failure to promptly pay the cost of material, its make up and use, it may be indulged, and to its indulgence no one has any valid right to take exception, but the moment it trespasses on any of these—hinders duty to God, to self, to fellow mortal, or deprives any one of just dues, or in any wise really injures, then it is *morally* wrong.

CHARGE MADE.

But it is not our purpose to discuss this feature of extravagant dress or diet. We charge it as being a thief of homes, and the most we shall attempt is to substantiate this accusation or indictment. Not so hideous a

thief as those we have already described, producing as extreme bodily suffering or visible wretchedness. Not mentally so ruinous, or morally so corrupting, yet showing itself in results of this order, more or less marked. It is the only cause of unowned homes in the case of multitudes, not comparatively, but in the aggregate. Here are men earning from six, seven, eight, nine, ten to twelve hundred dollars annually in our larger towns, and from one to three and four thousand dollars in our cities. They are mechanics—skilled workmen in wood, iron, brass, stone, silver and gold. Are clerks, bank accountants, salesmen, merchants, and members of the various professions. They have held their position for years. Their wages have been promptly paid. We wonder why they have not saved out of them in the course of eight or ten years, a home, or means adequate to the purchase of one; if not imposing, still a home. They are addicted to none of the vices of which we have treated, not unless in the most moderate manner. Still they are poor, having no surplus of means. We look or search for the cause. The only thing we discover, by which their condition can be explained, is a wardrobe overstocked with costly garments, a table usually most bounteously spread, with frequent social entertainments combining an expensive lunch. And this being the only difference we can discover between such men and others getting no more, following the same vocations and having the same habits, and yet owning their own homes, or possessing enough to purchase them, we reasonably conclude it

must be the cause. We know ministers who for twenty years have received generous salaries, who out of them have saved literally nothing, while others receiving no more, with as large families to support, and as many calls for and as liberal answers to charity, have saved a snug sum. And there is no way to understand it, but the way of which we are speaking. The best of everything clothes and feeds the one class, while those of the other are content with what is less expensive in dress, yet no less neat; less luxurious in diet, but no less life supporting. A man may supply the table wants of a moderate family with four hundred dollars a year and yet may expend four thousand. He may clothe his wife and children with less than an hundred dollars apiece, and yet may expend three times that sum. His extravagance in dress may extend to rooms as well as person, and his diet to mind as well as body. The clergyman or clerk, the anybody, who subscribes and pays for two or three monthlies, one or two dailies, and four to six weeklies, who must have a paper or magazine for every child of the household, is almost, if not altogether as extravagant as the man, who against the winter provided a pig for each member of his family, himself and wife included. There is more food in both cases than can be healthfully appropriated, and unless a lucky disposition of the surplus is made, or revenues increased in some extraordinary way, it is to men of such salary as we have described, constantly pecuniarily exhausting. Men may affirm in this matter what they

choose, it is a clear case to us, that extravagant, useless, unnecessary purchases, explains inability to save anything in cases where in no other wise it can be accounted for.

But not only are men prevented getting homes by this thief, but men who have them often find themselves deprived of them by him. We all know this to be a fact, "I see the sheriff has gotten hold of A's property," a man says speaking to a neighbor. "How is it do you suppose? He has an excellent reputation in the community and I notice is very diligent and attentive to business." The individual addressed has his own solution of the trouble, has discerned the cause and answers in one breath, "*fast-living*." Have we not heard it given over and again as the secret of financial embarrassment and failure? Living beyond regular earnings. Living up property previously gotten or accumulated. Wives and daughters with a passion for style and the customs of high life are often responsible for this, even where husbands and fathers have protested, asserting their means inadequate to the various demands of fashion. But more generally let us presume these last themselves to blame, they by a consent to it, and a refusal to state their true condition, encouraging it. We cannot believe that any but a minority of women, even of those fond of rich dress and diet, are willing to gratify themselves knowingly at the peril of losing their homes, and bringing financial ruin upon those who are their wedded partners or their parents. Yet

there are some entirely unconcerned as to this danger, and these, with those who have husbands and fathers as regardless of the future as themselves, make quite a number. This may be observed, that it is seldom that homes thus lost are such as have been gotten by mutual industry and economy, but usually homes that have been inherited, or bestowed, or owned before, or early in married life. Mutual toil that seeks and secures a home, generally associates with it a judiciousness, that retains it. Pity, however, it is, that persons who have come into possession of thus much, in *any* legitimate way, should not have a sufficiently wise love for, and determination to retain it, to abstain from anything that imperils continued ownership or possession. Yet who dare say that after this manner homes have not been stolen.

But this thief in addition to eating up the homes of those who favorably regard him, or preventing the husbanding of means necessary to the purchase of homes, not unseldom leads those who fall into his power to eat up or destroy the homes of others also ; often of persons economical in both dress and diet. Here is a young man, may be a middle-aged man, living beyond what his salary or income allows. He is unwilling to go less costly clad, and as his means are insufficient to support such attire and habit, behold what he does ! He robs his employer. Sometimes this robbery is detected, generally so in fact, before ruinous harm is inflicted. Sometimes not until too late for him against whom per-

petrated to save himself financially. Whether sooner than irretrievable damage is wrought or not, what is abstracted, is so much the worth or price of homes. Here is a banker, receiving from those whose money he handles a snug salary for services, but his income is still less than is needed to maintain him in the style he lives. Curtail this he is unwilling, so a plan to equal expenditures is devised. He speculates with the funds in his trust; or steals outright by means of false statements; and ultimately the bank failing, causes the loss of homes, or compels the surrender of money from those who have employed him that would have purchased homes. The same thing is true of many trustees who have in hand the legacies of widows and orphans. Here is another man who has no such opportunity of appropriating funds not his own, still living in a way legitimate revenue does not warrant. Unwilling to diminish this he borrows or secures endorsement to papers he fails to satisfy, or runs accounts that are never liquidated and in these several ways embarrasses and ruins. How many a merchant once prosperous, now penniless, whose change is due to the thefts of employees. How many stockholders, depositors, have lost, in some cases all, in others, large sums, from the faithlessness of corporation or bank officers? How many orphans and widows without shelter they can call their own, that would have this and many comforts besides, but for the stealings of those who had their inheritance in charge? How many men have had

their home and farm sold through endorsement, or their place of business taken from them because of accounts that proved uncollectable and worthless. And how in four-fifths of all these cases, the underlying cause has been extravagance! Indulging taste as respects person and table, in a way and to an extent means did not justify. No wonder that mistrust is so common. That men invest most cautiously; that surety is obtained with great difficulty; that credit is reluctantly given; that trustees are closely watched by wards and minors, and carefully guarded and bound by the law; that in large establishments clerks are restricted in the handling of money; that houses are let with such stringent agreement, notes of severest exemption often required. There is a large count of men—they move in all callings—who are not concerned about an honest livelihood. They are only concerned about getting the greatest amount of money possible; the best living they can. As to the method in which they secure it, or the individual at whose expense, they are not particular.

REPUTATION HARMED.

And so material theft is not the compass of extravagance. As intimated, reputation is taken with it. Sooner or later the dishonest accountant, the defaulting cashier, the thieving guardian, the cheating debtor, tenant, drawer of endorsed paper, is found out, and then his character is gone. The fact that he wanted to do right, and that his family by extravagance drove him to do as he did, does not excuse him in the eyes of the honor-

able public. "He is a thief," is the way in which he is known. All men stand in dread of him, even men as wicked as himself; for while there may be something that looks like honor among thieves, yet is there none in reality, and one thief knows he is never safe of another. Oh, to think that persons to dress well, live well, keep up style will do what entails disgrace the most gorgeous robes will not cover, what imparts a bitterness the rarest dishes will not sweeten. And yet it is being done every day, perpetrators forgetting the admonition or disbelieving it, "be sure your sin will find you out."

LIBERTY LOST.

Sometimes discovery is followed by a loss of liberty. The freedom of home and the comforts of domestic bliss thus stolen. How many men behind prison bars at this time, shut away from wife, children, parents, friends, because of theft enacted, to satisfy desires overreaching the ability of just revenue. How is discomfort and poor fare here, an overbalance for all the comfort and rich diet previously procured by unrighteous gains! Sometimes men guilty of theft, (and quite often of theft prompted by such motive as we are speaking of,) discovered, feel that they cannot endure the disgrace after the favorable reputation they have borne—the disgrace of exposure, of trial, of sentence and imprisonment—and so to surely avoid this, destroy their own lives. Many suicides here find explanation. And so many families thus deprived of their heads have found their

home circle destitute of more cheer, happiness and contentment, than the fullest earthly abundance, however gotten, can impart.

HEALTH AND HEART ROBBERY.

Nor is this the limit of the theft of extravagant dress and diet. Where it induces no crime whatever; no legal offence; it yet steals what should be preserved. Not unfrequently is health permanently injured by it. Inability to follow any vocation experienced as a consequence. A physician's aid rendered necessary long enough to half consume a home. And thus of the moderate comfort that might have for a life time been enjoyed, a home is deprived, through the extravagance of may be less than a decade of years. Where there are abundant means to support it, to enable a life like that of the worldling in scripture, "who was clothed in fine linen and fared sumptuously every day," there is through it often a robbery of those elements of soul and spirit, that are indispensable to a sunny home—a home which to its inmates is truly the dearest spot on earth. It is calculated to destroy humility, benevolence and charity, and to create greediness, pride, selfishness, illiberality and envy.

Its ulterior thievings—the eternal losses—we will not trace. Suffice it to say, that without question, it frequently terminates, through the sins it induces, or the exclusion of spiritual topics from the thoughts and meditations of those given thereto which it occasions, in a failure to obtain the endless joys of heaven. To

one who might doubt this we have only to say—look at the masses of those given to extravagant dress and feasting, whose main aspirations centre here, and see whether there is in their lives any of the spirit of Christ. Moreover remember that if we have not his spirit we are none of his, and so no heir to imperishable possessions. Very commonly are these worldly conformations and indulgences the death of spirituality.

RIGHT WAY OF LIVING.

How then shall we live? Wherewithal shall we be clad? Shall we subsist on husks or coarsest diet, and clothe ourselves with cheapest and poorest material? Our floors uncarpeted; our walls unadorned; our beds hard and uncomfortable; our rooms and chambers plainly and scantily furnished. Shall we be inhospitable, never inviting friends and neighbors to break bread with us? By no means. On the other hand we ought to live, as we intimated in the beginning of the chapter, one justly might, as comely and generously as we can, without infringement or trespass in any respect upon any one, or any interest, claiming support and provision from us. As well as we can without neutralizing influence for good or injuring reformatory work in which engaged. Support the cause of the Almighty, according to the Apostolic rule, "as he hath prospered" us. Give to the poor. To worthy enterprises that evolve the public weal. Make suitable provision for old age and the family, by annually laying aside a reasonable sum, or carrying a life insurance policy, and

then, unless we pretend to be an example of sobriety and moderation—a leader in matters of reform—we may indulge dress and minister to appetite as much as we are inclined, paying for all we get, and in no wise harming ourself, bodily, through imprudence, nor spiritually, through vanity and worldliness. Where there are large means, and these things are observed, it can scarcely be accounted extravagance, though one were to clothe himself like Solomon, furnish his home like a king, and spread his table with the best of herd and flock, of field and garden. There is a sense in which society is helped by people dressing well; furnishing their homes nicely; and supplying the table bounteously. The purchase of the best in the way of wear, of ornament, of home adornment, of table supplies, calls out the genius and industry of men. It advances in the arts and in invention, promotes most careful and intelligent cultivation of the field and garden; opens up additional pursuits; gives employment to multitudes more than would otherwise be employed; and so provides for them a living.

THING CONDEMMED.

What we denounce is living beyond means. Sacrificing duty to gratification. Indulging passion in this direction at the price of principle, consistency and moral rightfulness. Said a gentleman to his wife some years ago, “wife we will have to diminish outlay. Our means do not warrant us living as we do. I think we will have to do less for religious projects and the poor. I

am disposed for one thing, to reduce my pew rent to the assessed value of it." (He had been paying twice the price for years.) His wife heard him through, then answered emphatically, "If we have to retrench, all right, but I assure you retrenchment shall not begin where you propose. We will not diminish contributions to the church and the poor, we will deny ourselves." That is the spirit we would inculcate, though we need not so emphatically assert it. Any thing is an extravagance, unjustifiable in the mind of God, that hinders the grace and duty of liberality or prevents its full performance. What we argue for, is life according to means and profession. Not the utmost that these afford, but the moderation that they unquestionably justify. Oh that people cared less for popular opinion on this matter. Defied fashion, style, custom, and declared with firmness, that they proposed to live as well as they could and only so, without distressing themselves as to how to pay, without embarrassing husband or father, or in any way occasioning the least inconvenience to any one. Rather wear the old bonnet a little longer; the old coat another season; rather a few trinkets less; less sumptuous meals and less frequent entertainments; less furniture and less handsome; than worry or trouble as to how to pay for it; than a claim against a home; than even only consumption of all means; leaving nothing for sickness, old age and death. There are people of this latter description—we may find them in any community—who are not slaves to the laws and

sceptre of fashion. Who do consider the financial condition of those upon whom they are dependent or their own ability. Who dress as neatly and live as comfortably, nicely and bounteously as means and right allow, and care not for any remarks of pity, wonder, ridicule or contempt, or any social slight that may be shown them as a consequence. We want that this independence of spirit should more generally prevail.

THE MILDEST JUDGMENT.

The least that truth will allow us to charge against the matter we are considering, is, that it absorbs too much time, means and concern. So much time that hundreds have none left for the improvement of the mind and heart; for visitation among the poor and sick, for devotion and worship. With multitudes life has two thoughts—"What shall I wear?" What shall I eat?" And to these there is almost constant ministration. So great means, that "I cannot give," is the answer with which most touching appeals for charity and help are met, "it takes everything to keep up home expenses." So much concern, that the religious education of children; the salvation of brothers and sisters; the religious progression of professing christians are neglected and hindered. The proper clothing of the soul; its adornment with heavenly graces; its subsistence upon, and growth through the living bread, Christ Jesus; these momentous duties and possibilities are overlooked and remain without proper attention. Alas that such superior matters should receive inferior consideration.

We may relate with profit, to those of our readers who have never heard it, and may to like purpose recall it, to those who have read and heard it—the story of a German queen and her gardener's daughter. Every morning for days together, this royal personage witnessed a little child, playing delightedly amid the flowers, that adorned the enclosure of palatial residence. Thinking, that if the beauty outside occasioned such rapture, the splendors inside would throw her spirit into increased ecstasy, and anxious to witness this excited and animated condition in the child, she determined to call her, and show her everything of beauty and wonder within. She did so. Diamonds, pearls, and rubies, in various and most handsome designs, were spread before her. Curiosities of rare value and beauty, from different sections of the world. Paintings from the old masters. Plate from the finest factories, upon the finish of which the ripest skill of the age had been expended. All of which called out the pleasure of the child. Last the wardrobe of the queen herself, replete with gorgeous apparel; sufficient to carry into enthusiastic admiration any beholder. But when the child had seen it all, everything belonging to queenly attire, she turned with a satisfied look away and sang very sweetly—

“Jesus thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

The queen heard. Her's was the admiration kindled. Heavenly child she said and kissed her. How splendid

the garment that covered her! How invaluable her possessions! How above all earthly beauty and wealth! Thoughts like these filled the soul of the princely woman. How valueless in contrast, how lustrousless the gems and jewels of earth! How infinitely less to be coveted and desired.

MORE EXCELLENT FOOD AND ADORNMENT.

And is not this our conviction when in mind we picture the contrast; or when in the family, or society, we behold it? Have we not often, involuntarily so expressed ourselves? Two persons have been introduced to our acquaintance. The one covered with rich robes, set off with gold, handsomely encasing precious stones and jewels, without however any real mental or heart adornment—talk all of fashion, gayety and pleasure; the other plainly attired, little if any glitter or gold appearing, but mind and soul embellished with valuable information, noble purposes, warm sympathies, priceless spiritual achievements, with experiences that had lifted it, if not into the third heavens and to a perception of things impossible of utterance or description in human language, yet to a heavenly atmosphere that breathed into the soul revelations that come by no natural process; two persons thus differently and oppositely adorned, and how did the latter charm away from the former! How in excess of the first did the second elicit praise and encomium! Ah, what deference, what homage we do to adornments that are sought the least. That might be possessed in innumerable in-

stances where they are not, and where external ornamentation to any extent is an utter impossibility. Shall not stronger efforts be made in this latter direction? Shall not concern for the others be secondary? Shall we never attain to a true estimate or understanding of the value of things! "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," St. Paul writes in his epistle to the Romans; put him on like you adjust a garment—his wisdom, his righteousness, his beneficence, his gentleness, his love and pity—and the exhortation harmonizes with that portion of the message of the glorified One himself, sent through St. John to the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, "I counsel thee, buy of me white raiment that thou mayst be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." The costliest and most brilliant exterior fails to conceal emptiness of soul and spirit, and despite it, the knowledge of this inward state, again and again suffuses with shame, and in the light of the judgment with no less than painful embarrassment. While homeliest apparel is overlooked and plainest face has a glow put upon it—of courage, purity and peace, after the nature of the divinity that momentarily absorbed the humanity of Christ on the mount of transfiguration, when his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light—by a soul, that is divinely dressed or wears the image of God's well beloved son. Oh, that deeper than they have, these convictions, these truths, these acknowledgments spontaneously made, might get hold upon us all, and that we might all be pre-eminently

concerned for the proper clothing of our immortal spirit and for its proper feeding also. Shall we not array it, every one of us, in garments that will find it audience with the eternal king, audience and gratulation likewise? Shall we not nourish it that it may be equal to all that to heavenly entrance and accessibility is essential? Those of us who profess the religion of Jesus Christ, who lay claim to spiritual renewal, shall we at last discover our profession mere pretension, ourselves without the wedding garment, and for its lack be ejected from the heavenly courts, and so excluded the festivities of complete redemption? Poor soul that contents itself with external habiliments, that however beautiful to sight, are fading and perishable in nature; with delicious meats and fruits, that impart only momentary sweetness, comfort, strength, and that merely to body, while the food that gladdens and nourishes forever, and yields a taste intensely sweet and eternally continuous, is allowed to remain untouched and uneaten. May the remorse and sorrow—remorse bitter and sorrow lasting—that is sure to eventuate such a choice be neither yours nor mine. God save us from the spiritual ruination that by earthly glitter and sweet, has been brought upon unnumbered lives.



VII.

Mismanagement or Wastefulness.

Among the fairy tales that delighted us in our childhood, and that please and charm the children of to-day, there are many which consist merely of a description of the power of single words and forms of speech. Magic words and phrases they are called, and the tales are a narration, interesting, if not true, and harmless, if not profitable, of the marvellous things achieved through their knowledge and use. Through acquaintance with, and employment of them, homely persons are made handsome, deformed persons symmetrical, obscure persons famous, and beggars transformed to princes.

FACTS EXPRESSED BY A WORD.

Although we know these tales to be mere fanciful creations, unlike parable or allegory, or many another story with similitude in real life, yet this is true, that there is many a line of action expressed by a single word or sentence, that has accomplished, not instantaneously but ultimately, transformations both good and evil, fully as amazing as those in these stories portrayed. For instance, care, has rendered untidy persons cleanly; sickly persons healthy; persons imperiled in many senses safe. Study—cultivation of the manners and

of the mind—has made naturally repulsive and uninteresting persons, agreeable and entertaining; given to obscure persons, social, civil, national, and ecclesiastical prominence. Industry and economy have lifted from hovel to residence palatial—from the ownership of little or nothing to proprietorship over, or partnership in, very lucrative businesses. So changes of a reverse order are indicated by a single term. Changes from height of every kind to depth of every description. From beauty to hideousness; from honor to disgrace; from affluence to poverty. Once an artist made a portrait of a beautiful child and hung it in a conspicuous place; years after, he or another, painted the visage of a beastly looking man, whose very appearance was fear instilling; but the child was the man, or the man was once the child, the astounding dissimilarity due, to age and intemperance. Treachery in many cases, explains the change, from honor to disgrace; stealth, in many others; unchastity in others; while many single words or phrases as we have seen, each descriptive of a quality of action, disclose the secret of pecuniary transformations or of financial reverses. Among the kinds of action resulting in the last way which we have not as yet specified and which we now propose considering is mismanagement or wastefulness.

HOMES LOST BY MISMANAGEMENT.

You will not object to our calling this a thief of homes. The fact is apparent to the observing eye. Do we not know persons whose circumstances are to-day

the opposite of what they were ten, twenty, thirty years ago, for which change this is the only perceptible, and beyond question, the only reason. Some of them inherited fortunes; others a generous sufficiency for a moderately conducted livelihood; others at least enough to be of consequence and help to them. Not given to any bad habits, nor failing more than men do ordinarily in other directions that might be named. No spend-thrifts, no idlers, employing best efforts to get on, and yet losing until all is gone, all, comparatively so, if not wholly, and by mismanagement. My mind reverts to the case of a man who was left a farm by his father, the farm on which he was born and reared, which farm after a score years of occupancy passed out of his hands. It ought to have supported him and his family comfortably their life time, and would have, but for mismanagement. As it was, from when he came to own it, until ownership had ceased, it wasted from his possession. Every year bills of indebtedness were increased, which came finally to be supplanted by judgment notes and mortgages, and then it was gone. The way is easily described. A shingle torn from the roof of barn or shed, was allowed to be unreplaced, until a dozen or two more had been dislodged, and the contents of the loft injured. Wagons and agricultural implements of various kinds were kept unsheltered from the weather, and so annually needed repairs. A panel of fence thrown down by storm was usually let alone, until many panels came to keep it company; or cattle entering the inclosure de-

stroyed growing crops. Work ripe for attention was neglected for work, that by delay would not have suffered, and afterward at loss, or additional hire, had to be performed. And thus with other matters. We recollect a man who by marriage had six thousand dollars placed in his hands. He had been a merchant on a small scale years before, and now with this, re-entered upon larger basis his earlier vocation. But by impromptitude in purchasing, receiving his goods after people generally had been supplied—and then unable to dispose of them to advantage; or, by an excess of one article, a deficiency of another, a failure to hurry out old stock and keep shelves well replenished with new goods; by tardiness in collecting bills and thus saving percentage in buying, and interest in crediting, and so on, he retired after years of business, with but a few hundred of his six thousand left. We believe that many mercantile failures in our larger towns and cities are due to no other cause, than mismanagement. We are led the more to believe this, because frequently where one man has been ruined financially, another has been financially prospered, no observable difference in the times or circumstances, or in the individual, save in the matter of management. A flouring mill, an iron mill, a furnace, that has consumed, the previously accumulated means of one man, has advanced the means of another to prodigious proportions, the secret of the adverse results, lying in management. This difference of management may be owing to a want of knowledge of the

business, but more often possibly to a want of care or forethought. Where from a want of knowledge it might be remedied, largely at least, as also where it results from a want of care. Surely it is a pity, that from a matter of this kind, so criminally innocent, and so remediable for the most part, such disastrous, impoverishing, embarrassing, saddening, and sometimes heart breaking effects, should proceed. While vast interests are lost by it, small ones are likewise. It has eaten up homes of mechanics and shop keepers, the extent of deceased parent's bequeathments, as well as the grand or costly things we have enumerated.

ACQUIREMENT OF THEM PREVENTED.

But not only are farms, stores, mills, and property in other shapes, amounting in value to the cost of many homes sunken in this way, but by or through it, individuals are hindered accumulating means to possess a home. We are acquainted with men of excellent moral habits, who toil faithfully in chosen pursuits; dress moderately; seem to spend cautiously; indulge no spiritous drink; rarely patronize an amusement of any kind, who after long years of toil at fair wages have not saved anything. It is explained by one fact, mismanagement, or general bad management, throughout the home. Let us particularize.

EXHIBITED IN THE MATTER OF RAIMENT.

First, in respect to the buying and the wearing of raiment. A parent is in search of clothing for his or her child. Two, three, four webs of material are dis-

played for examination and selection. The price of each is the same or nearly so. The pieces are all neat enough, though not all alike serviceable; neither equally adapted to manner of life, nor to the season of the year. Fascinated by color or figure, that one is chosen, which though somewhat more pleasing to the eye, is not calculated to endure nearly the wear that the rejected piece or pieces would; and sooner than another, because of season, must be laid aside. Or again one pattern is determined upon in preference to another, because the price is so much less, whereas the costlier one would really be the cheaper—the pecuniary difference being more than balanced by difference in durability. Here good management is shown between two articles of equal price, and both sufficiently neat, in taking the more serviceable one; and between two articles of different prices, in taking the one that if at first more expensive, is less expensive in the end; bad management is shown in the opposite way. Every parent who has raised children knows, that among goods almost or altogether equally well appearing, one suit of clothes is half again as cheap as another, on this very principle of better wear. Every man who has furnished his own wardrobe, has knowledge of the same fact.

Wear is not to be the leading consideration. We must not be so understood. Good management embraces of necessity no such idea. That would throw out of loom and market the finest fabrics woven and sold. Would be detrimental to art, or genius that in

art of this description, manifests itself. It would revert unhappily upon mind and heart, thought and feeling. And thus things, priceless and invaluable, would be injured and lost, for things of inconsiderable consequence in contrast. No. The beautiful in dress because of its associate tendencies—the love for other things of beauty and charm which it begets—wants to be cultivated as far as it prudently can be, and not suppressed. Refinement and genuine social elevation lie in its line. Purity and holiness are grand summits to which by its reflex influence it at least leads or inclines, when uncombined with or unneutralized by vanity. But after beauty, comfort, and adaptability, wear is to be considered. Usually before beauty in small excess, or beauty when by durable excellence opposed; always before mere nominal cheapness. Controlled by the latter idea, many persons have shown and show, bad management in purchasing articles of apparel. Then in the wearing of clothing, saving and wasting management are shown. Two ladies secure a dress off the same roll of material at the same time. That of the one, is in good condition, long after that of the other, has been consigned to the place of retired garments. Not because of many changes the former had over the latter, but because of superior care. Not wearing it in every sort of weather, nor at all kinds of employment. Not hanging it anywhere, but in a well adapted place. If from any cause a rent occurs, promptly repairing it, and not delaying until the rent enlarges itself to proportions, that render mending

difficult and unsightly. And so precisely with men, and thus also with children. Ah, what money there is in an individual's management of his, or her wardrobe; in a mother's management of her children's clothing alone. So much, that many a child is clothed on a half, and a third less than many another, and yet appears to equal or improved advantage. So much that the sum total in years would be no insignificant item toward the ownership of desirable homes.

IN THE PURCHASE AND PREPARATION OF FOOD.

But the evil of mismanagement reveals itself likewise in the purchase and preparation of articles of diet. It is a skillful matter to market well. An accomplishment we may term it, with which few, if any persons are born. Something to be acquired by thought, careful observation and experience. Worthy of the aspiration of more persons than at present have ambition in this direction. So it is an attainment most creditable to render table supplies wholesome and palatable. To get the most and best for the outlay in the first case, and to use to most profitable advantage in the second. We are not arguing for meanness, mark, for a lean larder or few and meager dishes. Saving management does not exclude sufficiency in any particular, condition justifies. Against waste from unwise purchases; from overabundant and unsavory serving, we contend. Crumbs will fall from the rich man's table. In best regulated homes there will be fragments remaining. And when there are poor to call for and receive these; when with this idea in

mind food is prepared in larger quantities than it would otherwise be, circumstances warranting it, it is not to be considered a loss. But where such is not the case, it is. In a literal sense "it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." Not right to allow that to become waste and refuse, which would nourish and sustain human life.

Nor will excellent management or genuine housewifery, admit of superabundant preparations, even where there is no direct loss—where overplus is charitably disposed of—when such benevolence is out of proportion to means possessed and is self-impoverishing. A heavenly endowment is a spirit of charity. Christ-like surely ; and though there is little danger of it being, it must not be, excessively overdone. There are persons who dispense goods with a lavishness that, in the light of their limited means, justly exposes them to the charge of bad management.

PROPRIETY OF EDUCATION HERE.

Well would it be, if aged women—women of knowledge and experience—who have guided homes, under industrious and judicious husbands, from tenantry to landlordry, would, in conformity with the apostle's advice, teach the younger women, besides other commendable accomplishments, which he specifies, these also—"to be discreet," "keepers at home." Well, if more young women, who are disposed to comply with the same apostle's advice, given in another letter, namely, "to marry," would ask and receive training in a matter,

that may involve wealth or poverty, happiness or misery. She hath one of the characteristics of a good wife, saith Solomon, "who looketh well to the ways of her household."

WHAT WASTE WOULD DO.

The food that is cast away from the tables of the land—that spoils from proper care of one kind and another—would feed sumptuously an army of ten thousand persons. Would, if convertible into coin, purchase annually an hundred comfortable homes. Would dry the tears in countless eyes; renew the strength of multitudes wasting from insufficient and unsuitable diet; would lift from the heart of hosts a burden, that is crushing out all hope and animation; all desire of life; and weighing to death and the grave. Ah, what external, what internal desolation it would cause to end! What confirmation there would be, well nigh within stones throw of our churches, of that delightful prophecy—"the wilderness and the solitary place shall be made glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Yes, home barrenness and loneliness, home wildernesses, that even Christ's coming, not to it, but the world, has not rendered fruitful or beautiful.

Years ago a hard working man said to me, tears the meanwhile bedewing his eyes, "I wish that I had for myself and family, what my neighbor throws into the swill. He wastes more and better than I can buy." How I pitied him! How I wished that the wastefulness of the one, might diminish the penury of the other.

Oh God, what changes in this world transpire ! I lived to see that man, like the starving prodigal in a far off country, "who fain would have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat, and no man gave him," himself so destitute, that he would have almost eaten that swill, if it had remained to him. A verification of the common adage—"willful waste makes woeful want."

RIGHT VIEW OF IT.

Loss from mismanagement does not only occur in the homes of many rich, but likewise in the homes of many in very moderate circumstances ; where manual labor is the only source of supply. It aids in explaining inability to own a home in innumerable cases. Guard against it. With the cry of want ascending to heaven, incessant, constant, unending ; as Webster said of the reveille—the morning drum or bugle call—of the British army, which follows the sun from his rising to his setting, and never ceases, since on England's dominions the sun never sets ; with this interminable cry to heaven for bread, bread ; from innocent childhood, from untrained and helpless youth, from enfeebled age, from struggling, famishing, disease stricken manhood and womanhood, let wastefulness in diet be considered, what it is, inexcusable and sinful and so abstained from and denounced.

DOMAIN OF MANAGEMENT.

But management goes further than this. It extends to furniture, domestic utensils, to plate and every manner of glass and stone ware. Where care is exercised

how much more seldom is replacement and replenishment needed, while appearance continues most excellent and comfort is not diminished. There are homes to-day with carpets on some of the floors, and spreads on some of the beds, and linens in some of the drawers, in condition entire, that have been in more or less constant use for twenty, thirty years. There are chairs, tables, dishes, knives, forks, spoons, vessels of wood and iron, brass and tin, that have seen as lengthy service, and yet are in state well preserved. But the hands that have had them in use were, and are, careful and judicious. Use, not abuse, is the idea they have had all along of them. The carpets were not suffered to lie year after year unlifted, to be worn through by the settlings beneath them, or to be consumed by moth. The spreads and linens were not rubbed to pieces in the washing; or pulled from their place of drying, as if they had rooted in the line; nor scorched or burned in the ironing. The chairs were not made to serve the object of step ladders, to answer instead of swings and see-saws, nor the tables to do the service of carpenter benches, or amusement platforms for children. The vessels of wood were not allowed to stand partially filled with water in winter time, until they had broken from freezing, or in summer time empty and exposed to the heat, until they from the latter cause had fallen to pieces. Nor were the vessels of tin, iron, brass, permitted from neglect to properly dry, or care for them, to give less than half, or quarter the use they were calculated to, and rightly cared

for would render. No, in such homes, furniture and utensils are restricted in use for what designed, and caution is taken to prevent as far as possible misuse or abuse.

Let me say while treating of management in the caring of domestic property, that as in the matter of dress so here—good management is shown in the purchase of a good article. A silver spoon is cheaper than one of tin or pewter if cared for. So a knife of well tempered steel, with a nice and firmly adjusted handle, is cheaper at three times the cost, than one of iron, and poorly constructed. A vessel of any description well made and out of superior material is cheaper than one hurriedly put together out of inferior stuff, though the cost of the former be double or triple that of the latter. A five or six dollar chair is cheaper commonly than one for a fifth or sixth part that price. And so on through the line of household goods.

In the lighting and heating of many homes there is great mismanagement or wasteful management. A fire is kept in the stove, range, or furnace, of such power, and with little reference to character or amount of work, that noticing it day after day, one finally concludes, the domestic or servant, and possibly housewife herself, is endeavoring to see how great a quantity of coal can be consumed in a given time. Stoves are emptied, and large quantities of half consumed coal are carried out, which is well enough and not to be condemned, when done by the rich, who dwell in neighborhoods, or deposit their ashes in localities, where ash heaps are looked out

and searched for fuel by the poor, but is clear waste where no such search is made. The lights are turned up or on to twice the height and strength that is necessary for any work that may engage attention, or for any social comfort or enjoyment.

We shall particularize no further. The details given convey an idea of mismanagement. We have no fears that any one will dispute the fact that he has kept from the possession of homes, as well as stolen away many homes, inherited and possessed.

UNIVERSALLY PRACTICED, WOULD IT ADVANTAGE?

But possibly it may be thought that it is well there is not the management we have described. If all persons were so very careful of their dress—of their table—of the furniture of their homes—of the various things we have mentioned, and in the various particulars specified—there would not be the labor, employment, and so on, that there is, hence not the earnings, and in this way the community might be disadvantaged. It might so seem. But first, there is no danger of all persons becoming so prudent in management, and second, if they did, it would not diminish the demand for manufactured goods and thus render employment more difficult to be had, or leave tradesmen with less to do. The demand for goods of a poorer kind might decrease, but the market for good articles, would with a saving of means truly increase. The stock of domestic property would receive additions. Pictures, books, musical instruments, likewise articles of external profit and pleasure. Houses

would be erected by the money saved, or improvements to homes owned, would be made, and these would furnish revenue to merchants and workmen. No, saving management instead of injuriously effecting labor or employment, would more likely, all branches of industry considered, have the opposite tendency.

NOT JUSTIFIED IN THE RICH.

But a man is rich you say, (*you say*, for a rich man seldom makes the remark of himself,) is rich, and needs not save or manage well. Waste as much as he will, wear out, crush to pieces, rust through as often as he can, revenue is adequate therefor. If he had to refurnish his home every month of the year, he could do it, and no financial inconvenience be experienced. But in the home of such a man, as much as in the home of one in dependent circumstances, bad management is a thief. A thief of means, that would provide permanent lodging places for poor unsheltered souls; old, decrepid men and women, themselves helpless through age. Homes also for orphan and abandoned children, where instructed in the useful arts, or educated in a profession they might be qualified to care for themselves. Given to the benevolent organizations of the land, it would ultimately result in bodily as well as soul comfort to benighted ones, among whom religiously enlightening and converting operations, are being conducted. Ah, what in this praise worthy direction might not be achieved, for the money represented by the waste in many homes of wealth! No matter what a man's resources may be,

with so much poverty abounding, as already said, so many noble charities seeking aid, he has no right to be wasteful. With so many deserving persons calling for help, and God continually inviting it, there ought to be, the more judicious management, that it may be the easier and fuller afforded.

AN INCIDENT.

Some of you may have read the incident we are now about to relate, the scene of which was in Boston, Mass. An agent of one of the Christian unions of the country entered a mercantile establishment in that city, with a view to solicit a subscription, to the work of the society, he represented. When he drew near to the desk of the leading partner, he heard him reproving sharply and at some length, a clerk who had carelessly soiled a postage stamp. "There's nothing here for me," he said mentally, as he listened to the severe reprimand. "However I will do my duty, I will ask." As soon accordingly as the opportunity afforded, he introduced himself, stated his business and exhibited his credentials. The merchant looked them carefully over, asked for his subscription list, wrote his name, filled out a check, and handed all to the stranger. The check said pay to the order of the society, five hundred dollars. The agent was astonished. He could not restrain utterance. "Sir," said he, "after I had heard the reproof you administered your clerk for wasting a postage stamp, I did not expect anything. You surprise me, after so much ado over so little, with a subscription of half a thousand." "Ah,"

said the merchant, "it is by being careful in things as small as that, that I am enabled to give, not only to you and your cause, but others also, as generous sums." There is a vast difference between management and stinginess, both as respects one's self and one's business—between economy and meanness. The former is not inconsistent with generosity or benevolence—the most abundant comfort of body, mind, spirit or estate. Let this be remembered, and while stinginess and meanness are deeply abhorred, let management and economy, be studied and practiced.

There is one thing, that aside from natural endowments, and above all external things, will assist to saving management. It is readily surmised. A disposition in sympathy with Jesus Christ. A renewed nature. Christianize a man and you sharpen his conscience here as in other respects. It is a sin to waste, is among the realizations that make his new experience. "I must not do it." Moreover characterizing this new nature, is a spirit to "do all things decently and in order," and order and decency are wonderful preserving agencies as we very well know; it being for lack of these qualities and refusal to cultivate them that most valuable things are lost and ruined. Then with it comes a desire to do good; to help on noble projects; and with this desire a determination to save, to exercise caution in the way of living, that the greater support may be rendered. Then too, there is a feeling of responsibility. "I must in the keeping of my house be an example to

others. I dare not waste or they will waste, dare not, or, I cannot reprove those who do, and save them." Such thoughts cannot be debarred access to the heart, and accordingly work favorably, in the respect indicated. Looking around us, we may observe wasteful management in homes of all ranks and classes, but far, very far less proportionally in those homes where the love and fear of God are cherished and felt. In every respect—in business project or pursuit—in professional accomplishment and achievement—in all life's struggles, trials, difficulties and perils—nothing helps to success, the overcoming of evils, great or small, like the grace of God, or the religion of the Saviour. And though the reasons upon which we urge its seeking and finding run out principally into the far beyond, compassing the felicities of the future life, yet are advantages of temporal nature resulting therefrom, not to be despised. For what it will do for us in time and in eternity—in affairs worldly and spiritual—let us earnestly entreat its bestowment upon and possession by us at the divine hand.

Once a traveler stopped at a cottage door for a draught of water. He noticed everywhere within, marks of degradation and poverty. He understood the effect of this to be discontent and strife. Leaving he said to the inmates "there is a treasure in your house, which if you find will transform your condition." They searched, and the wife divinely guided, found it at last in the shape of an old Bible. The title page was inscribed in

a mother's handwriting—"The law of thy mouth is better than thousands of gold and silver." "Its what the stranger meant," they mutually said and began its study. A year went by. The same traveler passing that way called again. He scarcely knew the place, it was so transformed. So clean, so neat, so well ordered. "Thanks, thanks," was the greeting he received, "we have found the treasure." "Now dwells the blessing of God in our house, his peace in our hearts." Ah, how many homes, desolate and uninviting from wastes indulged and tolerated, for want of tidiness and care, would change complexion, if the Bible were made a study, and the religion of Christ a possession.





VIII.

PENURIOUSNESS.

It is an old advice, current among many generations, of questionable authorship, but like many another old and anonymous thing most excellent, this advice, "avoid extremes." Excellent as applied to human life in all its ordinary phases, since between extremes lie health, comfort, peace and prosperity, and blessings otherwise of body, mind and spirit, while at extremes the reverse of these are wont to prevail.

"Extremes, though contrary, have the like effects,
Extreme heat mortifies like extreme cold ;
Extreme love breeds satiety, as well
As extreme hatred : and too violent rigour
Tempts chastity as much as too much license."

Too much medicine is as bad, so far as its restorative properties are concerned, as an insufficient amount, death through either resulting. Too much food debilitates as well as too little ;

"They are as sick that surfeit with too much,
As they that starve with nothing."

Clothing too abundant and clothing too scanty may be equally imperiling. A certain amount of exercise is highly profitable, developing physical powers, purifying

vital organs and functions, stimulating mental energies, but too great exercise, will work consequences as serious as those, which are attendant upon exercise too restricted. A modified measure of reading and study gives the intellect stores of most useful knowledge, renders mind a great power in any profession or pursuit to which it chooses to give itself, but excess of reading and thought may bankrupt it of all healthful sentiments, and leave it weaker than the intellect that has received no training at all—that has never even mastered the alphabet. Even in matters of divine obligation, excess is inexpedient and unadvisable, and accordingly we have the caution of the wise man, “be not righteous overmuch.” Too much fasting and prayer; too constant Bible reading and pious visitation; too extreme views of religious duty accompanied with extravagant advocacy, might not to self result as spiritually injurious as utter deficiency in all these things, but yet might result no better morally, as concerns those who witness them, or those upon whom brought to bear. Of excess here, however, the danger is by no means common. There is a grand medium in all things not absolutely sinful, or sinful in themselves, that is like the passage way between ocean shores; comfort, safety, and success lie by it, if anywhere.

PENURIOSNESS, A THIEF.

In a preceding chapter we dwelt upon the despoilations wrought by, or resulting from extravagance. We proved it, by logic and illustration, a thief of precious possessions; of homes and their comforts. In this

chapter we present its opposite, penuriousness, inclegantly called stinginess, and make of it the same charge. Wherever, however tolerated, it steals—this is the witness of eye and ear, of press and pen, of reason and experience.

TESTED ON THE FARM.

Suppose we test it on the farm. In the matter of seeding for instance. A man from shere closeness uses in the sowing or planting of a field of grain only half or three-quarters the quantity of seed he should. Is the act adding or taking, increasing or diminishing, enriching or impoverishing? For the present he gains in an area of many acres, ten, twelve, twenty bushels; that is he has that much more left, or is under the necessity of buying that much less, than his neighbor, who deposits in the soil the full amount adjudged and determined by experience proper for the extent of land sown. But in the future, the harvest, what? Why, he loses for every grain withheld from the fit proportion, an hundred grains at least, running into an aggregate of scores of measures. The contrasted crops are a literal confirmation of the scripture—"he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

If we test it in the matter of fertilization the result will not be different. The man who starves his land, will find his land starving him. He may to save outlay, cover with one load of enriching material a space that should have two, but then when he gathers he will cover

twice the land in getting his load, he otherwise would, so much shorter will be the hay, so much smaller the ears of corn, so much shorter and lighter the wheat and rye and barley. In fact the loss will be double, for the products besides being diminished, will in quality be inferior, and whether kept or sold, will be either to less advantage than if, of superior quality.

In the matter of feeding the same thing is true. The stall does not better than the field. The beast of burden or travel gives in labor or service according as is given to him. Poorly fed he poorly does. Whether in the matter of drawing or enduring; of bearing or conveying. His health and wear, length of years and market value, are in this way likewise favorably or unfavorably effected. With domestic animals the facts are not dissimilar. The supplies they yield are in keeping with the supplies—quality and quantity—which they receive. If nourishing food is given in wholesome amounts, dairy products, abundant, rich and well flavored will be returned. We are prepared to believe what we saw recently in a newspaper, as the result of a farmer's observation and experience "that one animal of any class or order, well fed, is more profitable every way, than two, fed insufficiently." Ah, stinginess in measuring provender to occupants of stable or stall is not economy; it is literal robbery.

The farmers who grow wealthy—extend their possessions—increase the value of their properties, whose goods command a ready sale and at a price even more

than fair, are those who in the respects considered deal with a liberal or lavish hand.

IN THE STORE.

And how is it in mercantile pursuits. Does it advantage or disadvantage? An individual engaged therein because of a penurious disposition keeps a limited stock of wares. He saves something. The interest of the money he should invest additional to what he has invested, in order to a well supplied establishment. Now what does he lose? Many, many sales on which a clever profit might be realized. Moreover, he discourages custom, whose demands and requirements he fails to meet, so that even when goods are wanted by those who are inclined to patronize him, which he could furnish, he is not called upon, because of the uncertainty as to whether he has them. If his stock is inferior, that at once deprives him of the wealthiest custom of the community, the people of largest means, who care least for the cost of an article only so it suits them, and is really excellent in quality; who save merchants time, which is money, by standing least long in the consummation of a purchase; and who moreover do not beat down the price. Sometimes a man's penuriousness leads him to dispose of an injured or spoiled article. He will not lose it, if he can avoid it. The result is, he loses the patronage of the one upon whose confidence he has imposed. We know a gentleman who moving into a strange community, selected a tailor. He was well-to-do, dressed well and his annual expenditure for

clothing was large. He purchased a well recommended garment, paid the price of a good article, but received a poor one. He felt himself intentionally swindled and changed his clothier. Now what did the man who deceived him gain? Half, possibly three-quarters, the sale price of the garment. What did he loose? Custom and influence that in years were worth more dollars by twice than he saved cents. We have knowledge of a fish merchant who sold a gentleman residing in the neighborhood of his market, a large fresh fish, sent him a stale one the cook found unfit for the table; he saved the price of one fish by that transaction; he lost the profit of an hundred, besides the profit of other goods in which he dealt; for the man he defrauded never again traded with him, though from shere convenience, if he had been squarely treated, he would have been a constant customer. Better a man should lose a whole web of cloth; an entire barrel of tainted meats of any description, than lose his reputation for honesty, and the patronage of good men.

Penuriousness in even fair transactions is not advantageous, but often the reverse. It pays to deal liberally. To give a little more than the exact measure, a little more than the exact weight, or a little something additional to articles purchased and paid for. We have among our acquaintances a druggist, who is in the habit of giving to boys who come to his store to have prescriptions filled, a handful of sweet meats. After having frequently noticed it, we once said to him,

"Charles, do you always do that?" He answered "yes." "You can afford it, can you?" "Very well," he replied, "it pays." When we showed by look our inability to understand him, he continued, "you see when a boy comes here and has a prescription filled and I treat him, he goes and tells other boys, and when they are sent to have prescriptions filled, they come here, because they know they will get something besides; accordingly many boys living at the head of the city, and at the base of it, for that matter, will, when sent to the drug store, run all the way to my place, passing half a dozen drug establishments, to get what is wanted. Do you perceive," he asked, "how I afford it?" "I do," we answered, and we did. We knew a dry goods merchant, who twenty years ago and less, did business in a flourishing inland town. Who quite frequently after selling a large bill of goods, would cut off a calico dress for the wife, or wrap up a dozen oranges for the children of the purchaser, and send them home with him, with his compliments. At first we thought it strange, but it was soon explained. "This is their place every time they want to buy," said the merchant. The profits on a costly dress, or a fine suit of men's wear, justified it, and he knew he would sell another and another, or their equivalent, through the influence of a gift. How natural for one to make his purchases where he can do as well as elsewhere, and secure a token of appreciation besides. A merchant may grow rich through penuriousness if his surroundings are such as

to compel custom, that is, if he has no opposition and can monopolize trade; but everywhere a wise liberality, or liberality and discretion, is a greater help to wealth. The written history of merchant princes, commercial men who amassed fortunes in legitimate pursuit of their vocations, support this statement.

IN THE SHOP.

And how is it in mechanical affairs. Does penuriosness in shop result differently? A mechanic is unwilling through it, to procure the necessary machinery or tools to do all the kinds of work that pertain to his occupation. Now what is the consequence? Why, he must reject many orders, and these being such usually as compensate the best, behold how he loses? Or he must toil a longer time for want of proper tools at a particular article of work and lose again, because of the diminished work he is able to produce in a given time. If his penuriosness leads him to slight a piece of work, its defective or imperfect construction is soon discovered, and besides the unpleasantness of being reminded of it, (a thing he is sure to be in many cases) his goods and workmanship are cried down by those who have sustained the bad bargain; his honor is questioned by them, and their further custom and such other as their report may influence are lost. If from closeness he employs inferior skill, there is disadvantage and no gain. For such skill, will exercise itself longer than better graded skill in the completion of a matter placed in its hand; will waste more time and material in its building, forma-

tion or execution ; give less satisfaction when done, so curtail profit, and injure and destroy trade. It is impossible to think of penuriousness in the shop as other than depleting in its results. It stands in the way of the ownership of homes. Men given to it in one direction or another, may despite the aversion and contempt which it creates toward them in the community, and the trade it turns away, still effect sufficient sales, because of peculiar surroundings to render them wealthy, but that fact does not prove that it is not thieving. A more liberal and generous method of business, would doubtless far augment their dealings however extensive they may be, as it is. Here again as upon the farm and in the store, illustrious examples will support our theory. Looking around us, we will find the larger hearted mechanics, other qualifications and habits equally good, leading in the matter of eminence and means.

IN THE FAMILY.

Practiced in the home or immediate family its fruits are of no improved character. By being a mean and sparing provider—by refusing to properly clad himself or his children—by keeping them on cheapest diet—by refusing personal and home ornaments and adornments—by being inhospitable—by forbidding and restraining innocent pleasures his circumstances would allow—a man may save sufficient money to buy one house, and another, and another, until if he lives long and no misfortune overtakes him he owns a dozen, but

his penuriousness will deprive him and his, of all that is homelike in the very house they inhabit, so that their condition will be more uncomfortable and unhappy than that of multitudes who own no homes, and abide in ill furnished and small dwellings. Among the most unhappy homes on earth are those where stinginess excludes comfort and enjoyment. Discontentedness is not more common, nor weariness more manifest, nor sighs more frequent in abodes unowned by occupants and characterized by poverty. Wives are to be pitied who have stingy husbands; children to be pitied who have stingy parents; there is little comfort for the former while the latter survive. No wonder that many thus domestically related to such, await with resignation their earthly departure, and are at peace when they go.

Years ago a young man of the age of nineteen entered gleefully a merchant shoe store. Addressing the proprietor, he said, "now take my measure for a pair of french calf-skin boots." "Why, what's the matter James," said the individual addressed, "you are not in the habit of ordering fine wear." "Oh no I have not been, but daddy's dead now and I will be able to get something decent." You may think it heartless in a child to have spoken so while his parent lay a corpse, but the penuriousness of the father, blessed as he was with great abundance, resulted in a forfeiture of the child's respect. The young man was of good habits, but coarsely kept, and unsuitably clad and shod, he rejoiced when the thralldom terminated. There are hundreds of such parents

whose death would be to children welcome intelligence. There are wives who would be equally satisfied to see their husbands eyes closed never in this world to open. They never will have a *home* while their fathers and companions live, though these own fifty or an hundred houses.

Penuriousness in the family is often directly thieving. Leading to feed or clothe improperly, or to failure to keep surroundings in good sanitary condition, sickness is induced and expense incurred, that would purchase fit raiment and improve and beautify property. We have known men too penurious to insure their homes, and subsequently to lose all they had, through fire. During the war of the rebellion when gold coin commanded a premium of one hundred and fifty cents—in other words when one dollar in gold was worth, or equal in value to two dollars and a half in currency—a farmer residing in the state of Illinois, paid a balance of debt to an individual, who when he once had the money retained it. He paid a claim of two hundred and fifty dollars with gold that he might have paid with one hundred, had he with that purchased our then depreciated paper money. The man was too stingy to take a newspaper and knew nothing of market values. Penuriousness here is in thousands of instances at the cost of farms and homes. That is to say, if laboring men and men who work in the soil, who do not, would take good papers, filled with valuable receipts, containing information, as to the tilling, the fertilizing and sowing

of land—as to the management and care of flocks and herds—all the animal occupants of the farm—the treatment of diseases incident to the brute and fowl creation ; as to the cultivation, the gathering and the disposition of farm products, of garden truck and fruits, money could be saved and money made, that would provide costly and capacious residences. The man robs himself who is not a patron to and reader of one or two standard newspapers. Other publications appertaining to his occupation will be found a paying investment.

IN THE CHURCH.

Penuriousness in the church, or in the matter of religious support, may not be so easily or logically proven thieving, and yet in the light of many scripture passages, it may be so declared. “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” “The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase ; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” The simple meaning conveyed by these and declarations of like order is, that by doing duty in the matter of beneficence we really add to our means, while by refusing to do duty we diminish them. It is not difficult to see how this can be. The favor of God which is only won by right doing, is essential to all prosperity. He can spring an hundred depleting agencies upon us, and as many replenishing

and enlarging ones. There is nothing in our observation to contradict an assumption or proposition of this order. Men have not gotten poor by giving to God. Among the millions of cases of abject poverty we are familiar with no one due to such cause. On the other hand if we are to credit biblical history, individuals and nations both, have been more or less impoverished by robbing him of tithes and offerings.

The reflex influence of giving is in itself enriching. Men give, and love to give, when once they have tasted of its blessedness, and then toil with hands or mind in chosen pursuit, and do the better in the matter of patronage and support, and so more than get back what they give, a confirmation of the Master's word—"give and it shall be given to you again." Besides hindering as we believe penuriousness as a rule does the growth or prosperity of material interests, it does prevent the laying up or the adding of heavenly treasures. We have these awaiting us largely in the proportion in which we bestow our goods to the poor and the cause of the Almighty. Of course a proper feeling must accompany their bestowment or other soul graces join it. What a paucity of riches in the sense of joy and peace; fragrant memories of duty done; divine command and entreaty complied with, they have, whose use of money is bounded by self; who keep all or give only what is compulsory. How such spirit and conduct deprives those having and showing it of inward realization of blessed order! What a miserable class of reflections

compared with what he might have, that man must have, who irradiates no life, who soothes no anguish, who administers no relief, who quickens and rallies by substantial sympathy and help no sinking or quailing energies, who assist to glorious completion no grand movement of church or state, who has nothing invested in internal improvements, in homes for the poor, in asylums for suffering, in saving operations among the benighted, in churches at home, nothing but what he has given under necessity and constraint. Besides stealing all that is delightful in the way of internal emotion, penuriousness deprives of all outward attachment and respect. Outward attachment as we have seen in the case of even kindred; respect in the case of men generally. We cannot help but secretly despise a mean or stingy man; can scantily show him civility. We cannot speak of him in terms of favor and must either be silent about him, or we will condemn and ridicule. We have a disrelish for the society of such persons and seek avoidance of it; wish we might never need come into it. We have known clerks and proprietors also, in large establishments, to make effort to get away from a penurious customer, preferring not to sell at all than to sell to such persons. Their reason was good, patronage here being without profit.

A heavenly home is oft-times included in the theft of penuriousness. The love of money which it embraces causes men to remain uninterested in spiritual things. They have no time, no thought for religion. Money

absorbs all their meditations. From the "rising of the sun to the going down of the same" it is the one controlling idea. It very often induces fraud and dishonesty, falsehood and robbery, with kindred crimes and iniquities, which exclude from the courts of heaven. Not without reason doth the apostle affirm—the love of money is the root of evil. How base, how bad, it has made men! Where it incites to nothing morally wrong, it often keeps from a profession of Christ and identification with the church, because of the expense connected with such step. It costs too much to be a public adherent of the christian religion. So men voluntarily elect non-profession or confession of Christ, in face of the words, "Whosoever shall confess me before men him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven." So they surrender the comfort of the assurance, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Is it not the old story over, the sale of a heavenly birth-right for a carnal gratification? If not lost in these ways through sins to which penuriousness allures, or through deliberate refusal to pay the price a hopeful profession necessitates, and so continuing in a condition of non response to divine claims, yet lost, because of the spiritual indifference and deadness penuriousness is likely to beget in the most moral. There have been and there

still are professing christians losing heaven through penuriousness ; gold and silver idolatry.

. SHOULD BE ABHORRED.

Let penuriousness then be deservedly abhorred. While avoiding extravagance that embarrasses—that plunges into debt, consuming all we have acquired or can acquire—shunning wastefulness that ruins and has want as consequence, let us not surrender or be subject to an evil equally despoiling of comfort ; an evil that makes the rich in one particular, miserably poor in another and causes us more to be despised by men, and threatens more with the disfavor of God, and the loss of heavenly mansions, than either of the others.

Be liberal. As much so as circumstances justly allow. It will make your life comparable to the sun which is ever dispensing golden rays—to the flower that is ever emitting its sweetness—to the fountain that continually casts out its bright and healthful waters. As these elicit the praises and admiration of men, so will you also. Better than this. As they fulfil the mission or object of their creation, so will you likewise. For as God did not intend that these should effect no further than themselves, or effect injuriously, so He does not intend that men should live only to themselves, or unprofitably to fellow men. Covet a reputation of this order, that when any noble measure is inaugurated in the community in which you live, or in the church to which you adhere, your name may at once occur to those who have it in hand as one sure to assist it, by sub-

stantial aid, to successful completion; such a reputation, as that deserving poor, struggling with the adversities and misfortunes of life, with affliction and poverty their best endeavors failed to obviate, and now further help impossible for the time in themselves, pausing to reflect ere they give themselves to utter despair and death, whether there would be any one likely to bestow them a little aid, to help them through the floods that threaten to engulf them, may think of you. There are few, if any ways in which men can prefer to be thought of living, or remembered, dead.





IX.

INDOLENCE AND EASE.

The twin "thieves of homes" that shall now occupy our attention, are not as hideous and disgusting in their appearance as several thieves we have described nor yet as attractive and pleasing, to sense of sight, as some others. Are not in themselves so ruinous, or morally so destructive, yet are thieves, exposing all who fall into their power and sway, to the peril of thieves, the worst we have mentioned—the most ruinous to every interest of man, whether of body, mind, spirit or estate.

PERILOUS NATURE OF INDOLENCE.

For it cannot be questioned that one given to idleness, or even easy exertion is in a favorable condition to be led astray; to be seduced by bad thoughts from Satan; captivated by wicked proposals from companions; or victimized by immoral suggestions from his own faulty nature. The individual who wrote in a child's paper, "occupation is the armor of the soul"—"the ruin of most men dates from a vacant hour," gave expression to a double truth, those who have traced iniquitous careers to origin, in such cases as they were able, are not prepared to dispute. Both sentiment and declaration harmonize with what another author has

said, "idleness is the mother of many wanton children. They that do nothing are in a ready way to do worse than nothing." Bolton calls "idleness, the devil's tide time of temptation, wherein he carries with much care and without contradiction the current of our corrupt affections to any cursed sin."

In every case where idleness and ease are primary agency or occasion to crime—to the darker ways and sins of men—they become a thief of the honor, the purity and peace of homes, and thus in the fullest, loftiest sense of their destruction. Because of the moral danger besetting such demeanor let there be earnest dread of it, and determined shrinkage from it.

TAKES PROPERTY.

In instances where men given to these habits are strong against any but very ordinary sins; unconquerably strong against any allurements or suggestion to crime; to act that merely savors of criminality; where ruin or loss of property is not incurred through deliverance by these into the hands of worse thieves; still are they themselves fostered and yielded to depriving in their effect of homes. Take a man who owns a house or farm that has come to him by inheritance, by marriage or by previous industry, who now settles down to indolence and ease. He need not even be idle, he has only to be easy or careless to have it pass from his possession. Failure to earn as much as is necessary to support himself or family, to keep his home in good repair, to pay the taxes that are levied upon it, must tell against the

property, and eventually to such an extent as to put it beyond his power to retain it. Possibly you could name persons, once freeholders, now tenants, who lost their estate in this way. A confirmation of what we have asserted, a verification of the proverb, "he becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand." Whether a case or cases of this kind can be mentioned by you or not, such cases exist. What Solomon describes as one of his observations—"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding: And lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down" is not without a similitude in point of fact, if not in figure now, and the result he then prophesied, as sure to follow a continuance in slothfulness, so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man" not without its exemplification in these days. It is the logical deduction of a premise stated—the natural fruit of a seed cherished. Where idleness and ease are supportable, that is, where they can be indulged without any such consequence as has been portrayed, the means of the individual being so large in principle and so well invested, that the interest revenue accruing therefrom is more than is exhaustible by an entirely doless and yet bounteous living, they are still thieves. For what might by industry be acquired, or what is lost by inactivity—the value of the time wasted—the sums that it would bring laboriously employed, would purchase many homes, and if not needed

by the individual would be gladly received by worthy poor. We have knowledge of a gentleman, residing in the interior of this state who years ago said to a friend, who remarked upon his industrious habits, "yes, but I am not laboring for myself. I have accumulated as much as I wish for myself and my household, and am at present working for others, and especially for the church." We know of two donations subsequently made by him. One of twenty-five thousand dollars to endow a collegiate professorship; another of eight thousand, to save from the sheriff's hands a poor and struggling church. We have no doubt that through his industry, and the liberality it enabled him to exercise, many of humble means were assisted to homes, that but for it, would have continued unpossessed of the same. Time wasted is money wasted. Moments are truly golden.

PREVENTS OWNERSHIP OF HOMES.

But it is in a preventive sense that we especially charge "Indolence and Ease" with being thieves of homes. They keep poor, hinder the accumulation of means necessary to provide a home. With good habits, good health, little else than diligence and economy are needed to finally possess a home. *This as a rule.* Where there is ambition for this and pursuit in this fashion it is usually attained. "The hand of the diligent," the wise man saith, "maketh rich." A man who works one day and rests the next, or one week or month and does nothing the following, often finds it difficult to even

make ends meet. We all understand this. He who toils every day may at the end of the year have a surplus. But a man says, yes, "but I cannot get work. I have been seeking it from city to city, and from village to village, and can find nothing to do." It may be true, strictly so in a few cases, and a sad commentary it is upon the general order of things, that a willingness and anxiety to labor should find no field of employment; in a great majority of cases, however, where alleged, it is not true. If it were spoken relatively or were qualified in this manner, "I cannot get work at my trade; cannot get such work as I want; or at such wages as I desire;" it would be more true. It is seldom necessary for a man to be idle; seldom a condition that is unavoidable. The truth is, idle men are too generally content to do nothing. They refuse to seek labor, but rather wait on it to come to hand, and in such shape moreover, as pleases them. Or they do work given them, so poorly and unsatisfactorily, or at prices so far in excess of value, that further engagement is not entered into with them by men who have work to be done. If they were possessed of proper energy and honesty, they would find employment; if not at this, at that. If not at liberal wages, yet at such figures as would be a vast improvement in the aggregate, on nothing. We have not unfrequently remarked this fact—the love of idleness by the idle—in that class of men who call at homes for something to eat or wear, or a pittance in the shape of money to get to the next town, (the next beer saloon

would often be more nearly correct,) asserting in piteous tones that they are out of work and cannot find employment—this fact—that they rarely call at houses, where, or when, there is a deep snow to be cleared from the pavement, a cord of wood to be converted into kindling pieces, or a ton of coal to be housed. We know likewise how cities and towns have wonderfully abated the tramp nuisance by the passage of an ordinance compelling them to do work on the highways or in public buildings, in return for shelter and food given them in police quarters.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT.

A year ago and more we accidentally met in the city market a young man who though illiterate had soundest views on the subject we are discussing. He was quite communicative and told us that he and his brother-in-law had been discharged from a shop in which they worked, because there were no orders for further goods. "I am here watching opportunity to earn something," he said. "Do you find it?" we inquired. "Ah, yes," said he, "I deliver goods, run errands, make myself generally useful, and take home every night as reward, one, two, and sometimes even three dollars. "My brother-in-law refuses to do anything because he cannot work at his trade, and the result is, that next spring he will owe fifty, sixty dollars, which will require his summer savings to liquidate, while I will be without debt, and have saved something." So much for the difference between a spirit willing to be idle, if it can-

not find work to suit itself, and one unwilling to idleness, though it must depart from a beaten path to find employment. It takes no great mathematician to see how in ten years' time, the one man may have a home of five, six, seven hundred dollars valuation, while the other has none.

We confess it difficult for us to understand the absolute necessity for idleness, where and while health is enjoyed. We cannot imagine ourself unavoidably in such a state. If we were disabled from preaching, or had no door of ministerial usefulness open to us, we feel sure we should find something to do, that would secure us a livelihood. But we would not wait to have it present itself before us, nor would we be too proud to stoop, if it had to be, to something lowly in character, only so it was honorable, and within our ability to perform. And then in order to make it a success we would follow it actively and uprightly ; do it well ; be cheerful, courteous, and obliging.

We are acquainted with a gentleman who began his ministry as assistant pastor to his father in the town in which he was born—subsequently became pastor of the town congregation of the charge ; resigned, after three years of service for want of adequate support, and because he thought some one might do better by the cause in that locality, than one “a prophet in his own country ;” at a time moreover when no field of ministerial labor invited his energies. But the day after his resignation he sought work and found it, in this case, in the office

of a government official. "If God has nothing for me just now of official character, I will do something for myself" he said, and so he wrought at scrivener's employment for two months, until invited to another, and in many senses delightful field of labor. The memory of whose occupancy, the experience of and during the same, remain exceeding sweet and precious to him. As he did, so others might do, of the same or different callings, under similar circumstances. The greatest requisite to constant employment where health is possessed is determination to have it.

EASINESS ALONE A THIEF.

But easiness alone hinders and prevents the ownership of homes. Easiness where there is no apparent idleness. We have in mind four journeymen carpenters, employed by a master in the busy times of sixty-five to seventy. One at two dollars and seventy-five cents per day, two at two dollars and twenty-five cents, and one at one dollar and fifty cents. We asked why? The gentleman said, watch and see the difference in their work. They were at the time adjusting and hanging the shutters of a house. We noticed during that day that while the first fitted and hung three pairs of shutters, the second and third hung little more than two, and the fourth but one and a half, and yet they were all busy. But the first wrought as if the whole house had to be completed that day, the second and third as if they must at least do a respectable amount of work, while the fourth moved his plane, raised his

hatchet, bored his holes, and drove his screws, as if it was the same thing whether the house was finished that year or next. This difference you have observed in all trades; one mechanic working by hand finishes two articles while another finishes one; one merchant waits on customers in half the time that another does; one day laborer will contract for and complete two jobs of work while another is contracting for and completing one; one domestic or house servant gathers and washes the dishes, or gathers and washes the clothes, bakes the bread and sweeps the house, almost in the time that another occupies in making the preparations for these necessities of the family, and does it just as well. Accordingly one person earns half again, twice, or three times as much as another, the difference in the course of years amounting to homes. But this difference is not always confined to the same ratio of wages. The industry and push of the one, causes him to be favorably regarded when more important posts are vacant, when men of vaster business enterprise than have previously employed him come to look out for managers, and then there is promotion, and wages are doubled, tripled, quadrupled, and not unfrequently even beyond this, increased. And so the difference eventually is equal to the cost of many homes.

In professional life the same thing is observable. More effectually does an easy, lazy habit steal here. The man of energy goes up front in medicine, in law, in divinity, in every sort of scholarship or intellectual ac-

quirement. The one who lacks these elements remains in the rear. To be sure there is much in natural endowments, just as in mechanical and commercial callings, there is much in natural adaptability or fitness, but after all with even balanced natural capacity, the victory or summit, is to the one who lends himself to the studies, the theory and practice, of his profession. There are physicians earning vast sums annually, living in luxuriant style, having every domestic comfort that heart could wish; able to munificent gifts and liberality; in a condition to gratify the most extravagant desires of their family; to visit interesting sights at home or abroad. And so there are attorneys in like favorable financial standing; while there are others, and a vast multitude of them in both vocations, who scarcely maintain themselves and those dependent upon them, earning as they do hardly above a thousand a year. The difference in material situation between the latter and the former would not be balanced by a half score of fine houses. Why? Because of the difference in ability in understanding, and skill in treating cases of both kinds put in their hands. And this difference owing to difference in research, examination, close thought. More often to this and more fully than to any superior native talent.

EMINENT OPINIONS.

A physician of great prominence once said to us, that the "one great thing to success and power in the healing art is enthusiasm"—"a genuine love of the profes-

sion, coupled with a desire to excel, stronger than the love of ease, or the love of pleasure." He might have made the remark general. It applies to sister professions—to all callings. "What men want," says Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, "in order to distinction is not talent, but purpose; in other words not the power to achieve, but the will to labor." "Nothing," says Mirabeau, "is impossible to a man who can and will. This is the only law of success." It is happily illustrated in the life of the late distinguished, ex-Premier of England, who when in comparative public obscurity said, "I have resolved to hold a certain position, and if I live I will." Also in the lives of many eminent Americans who knew no agency of exaltation aside from a determination to rise, and strong persevering effort. There is to-day at the head of the greatest railroad corporation of the land a man, who, years ago, served the same company in the capacity of civil engineer, but even then he had his eye on the presidency and began working to that end. After years of ardent toil, patience, and fidelity to every duty, there was realization of his ambition. "Excellence in any department," says Johnson, "can now be attained by the labor of a life time, but it is not to be purchased at a less price." Referring to eminence in calling, Sydney Smith says, "there is but one method and that is hard labor." "Nothing," says Reynolds, "is denied well directed labor and nothing is to be attained without it." "The difference between one man and another," writes Dr. Arnold, "is not so

much in talent as in energy." Take the testimony of these men, distinguished in learning, rendered by their writings immortal, who rose out of surroundings ordinary, no more favorable to advancement or fame, than those which characterize the birth, childhood, youth and educational advantages of hosts never heard of beyond the locality in which they resided, and you cannot other than believe what they say—that station in life, native conditions existing, is owing to untiring industry. An easy pursuit of learning would have prevented occupancy of the heights they held, and yet hold, in remembrance, if not in person. In every case their diligence may not have shown itself in pecuniary revenue far in excess of more idle and lazy ones, and still in the same line of pursuit it might, and would in well nigh every case, but for the fact that with many, especially ministers, teachers, scientists and often historians, it, that is money, is made a secondary consideration. There being those who would rather receive less and do more good, than receive more and do less good—rather have poverty and larger blessing and sanctifying influence, than riches, and of this other, a diminution. When one reflects upon the prices that professional men of various orders can command; those who by dint of zeal have come to be famous, leaders in their line, over those who for lack of it remain inefficient—of little account to themselves, their families, society or the world—the value of diligence, earnest, ardent diligence is perceived.

In all ages the thoughtful and observing have under-

stood its advantage. When Joseph reported to Pharaoh the arrival of his father and his brethren from Canaan, the Egyptian monarch among other words of welcome said, "if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle." Not vainly had the old man used his eyes and reason. To-day these are the kind of men inquired after by kings, by masters, by head men of all orders. It is among the first questions asked of persons who in the interest of others make application for situations. Active apprentices, active journeymen, active farm hands, active managers, expeditious clerks and salesmen, smart domestics are the kind of workmen and workwomen in demand, and this because of the profit there is in activity in various ways. Slowness, if known, though combined with a dozen admirable traits, is fatal to the procurement of a paying or promising situation. There is little allowance made for it. A habit that evokes no sympathy—that men are unwilling to use argument upon with a view to amend—that provokes impatience and frets to the discharge of the person given thereto. Men seem willing to persuasive efforts upon individuals who are victims to other bad habits, but appear unwilling to any toleration with this.

IDLE POOR MUST NOT COMPLAIN.

Let no man who is poor, unpossessed of a home or the comforts of one, find fault with his lot, murmur against Diety, abuse his fellow man better off, or curse his own luck as the expression runs, so long as this agent of ex-

altation, of plenty—zeal—stands ready to lead any and all who submit themselves wholly to her, to ownership and abundance. If we will put ourselves under the direction and behest of two such thieves as idleness and ease, we must not complain if they leave us homeless, penniless, without food or raiment. We are unreasonable to expect any better portion.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON IDLENESS.

Here as in the matter of wastefulness intelligent religion will help. So much is said in the sacred scriptures against slothfulness, so much in commendation of diligence; so is the one warned against and so the other, advised and counseled, that he who takes the scriptures as guide, as every true and well intending christian will, cannot other than have inculcated in him, an aversion to the one sort of conduct, and sooner or later a fondness for the other. He will understand that time is valuable—that it is capable of great results—that he has no right to waste it, that for its proper employment in one way or another he is responsible, and so will these thoughts embitter indolence or ease, such disrelish cause for them, that he will shortly find himself without desire for more of either, than is requisite really for physical and mental recreation.

Ah, there is nothing in the Bible, nothing in the lives of its illustrious saints—patriarchs, prophets, evangelists and apostles—of which mention is made; nothing in any of their teachings; nor yet in the life and teachings of Christ, favorable to indolence. As religion im-

poses scriptural reading upon her adherents, its profession and possession, will surely assist to a stirring active life. Moreover the services of the sanctuary to which religion brings a man, contribute to the same end. The psalms and hymns breathe a spirit of action. There is nothing dead or stagnant in any of them. The majority of them are quickening, lifting, developing, calculated to enlarge or draw out noblest aspirations and so effecting inwardly, they produce no conflicting, but a corresponding effect outwardly. So the prayers and sermons, the work of the church as announced from Sunday to Sunday, are all favorable to zeal of every order, save zeal in sin. Everything sung, said and done in the Lord's house, is in harmony with the texts, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing"—"What ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord." Surely we will find religion lived, its requirements complied with, its duties performed, conducive to activity in our occupations and callings, if these are right in the light of God's holy law.

A YET MORE COSTLY EASE.

Refusing to avail yourself of this helpful agent, you who are given to ease as respects earthly matters, are given to ease as respects heavenly things also, or to a double ease. The cost at which the first is maintained, is less than that at which the second is indulged; for this let me say, may be at the price of prepared mansions. To no indolent spirit are these promised. If they are to be had and with multiplied comforts enjoyed, then according to the divine word, holy work and

stir, as opportunity and means are possessed, are essential. One thing related to this subject remains a great pity. With its specification we shall close this chapter. It is, that many persons, who are untiringly industrious in their worldly vocation, toiling from morning to night, from the beginning to the end of the year, scarcely taking a holiday ; doing this, year after year, are idle, indifferent, or at ease, with regard to those things which are to engage thought and emotion when the boundaries of life are passed. Is it not a fact, and with divine revelation had, a strange fact, that individuals who in order to temporal abundance will exert themselves most zealously, never so to say resting in the race of life, will be entirely unmoved by the vaster, grander things of eternity ? That powerful ambition, amazing energy, should find itself centered, emptied, ended in what is after all perishable, incapable of lasting comfort to immortal spirit. Ah, that those who so well understand the value of industry in one direction, should know so little of its benefit and importance in another. The life that gathers nothing more than material acquisitions, though these be of richest order and in highest degree, may be denominated at its close, in a strong sense moreover, wasted and barren. Oh, you diligent ones who respond so earnestly to the demands of your physical nature ; who answer with unwearying research and study the calls of your ambition intellectually ; who embrace opportunities of earthly promotion readily and ardently ; let me entreat you be not deaf to the calls of

God and the needs of your immortal spirit. Rather seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Give to these priority of attention and esteem. Gifted with good judgment, competent to estimate things at their real value, bring your mind to bear upon spiritual interests. Look at them carefully, thoughtfully, soberly. As you do at other things that by wise and trusty persons, have been commended to you, with the assurance that there is profit and advantage in them. You know the inspection to which things thus recommended are subjected. If you would but do this, affairs of the character we are speaking of, would receive endorsement at your hand, to their securement you would give yourselves, and results be evolved in your cases as in others, precious and abiding, beyond the ability of wealth to procure, and honor and position to bestow. God increase the number of those whose concern compasses this life and that to come; who while they diligently provide against the wants of this, and secure its comforts, shall not overlook the necessities of that and its richer enjoyments. And may their diligence be no less marked in the latter than in the former.

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X.

CREDIT.

We shall endeavor to handle fairly the thief of homes which we now name for consideration. We say endeavor, because we have little patience with or for him, on account of inconveniences and troubles which in our earlier life he made us, and because of difficulties and sorrows into which he has led, and losses of various kinds which he has inflicted upon near and valued friends. Friends who steered clear of all the thieves we have already commented upon, maintaining an invincible front against alcohol, tobacco, bad books, expensive, profitless and damaging amusements, against gaming and gambling of every species and in every measure, who avoided extravagance and wastefulness and from slothfulness and indolence were far removed, who nevertheless went down under him, in some cases from affluent to moderate circumstances, in others from a sufficiency without worry and anxiety, to barely enough with hard labor, homes long owned surrendered under force, and comforts long enjoyed placed beyond further possession. All this at a time of life in a host of instances, when in best preserved bodies, energies of physical and mental kind begin to weaken and decay,

making a retrieving of fortune an impossible matter, and so forever disappointing previously long cherished hopes with regard to a distribution of goods, originally gotten or acquired, to beloved children, or to noble projects in the interest of church or state. Persons who realize it next to an impossibility to like a man, to look with even respect upon him, no difference how nicely he appears or blandly he speaks, who has occasioned them and esteemed friends such grief and injury as we have described, will not wonder at our seemingly doubting our ability to view candidly the thief of homes whose title heads this chapter—Credit. Credit as applied to dealings between individuals; thus for the time at least restricting its application and meaning.

There may be some persons who entertain of him a tolerably good opinion. Who might be willing to harangue in his behalf, but then there are persons, a few persons, who have something good to say of the lowest man in the community, generally so regarded. Not always altogether undeserved. There may be a little good about this thief; in a few instances he may have profited, but the most prevalent opinion of him, particularly among the wisest and best men is very poor. If an effort, well headed, were made to imprison and strangle him, there would be multitudes to assist. If not numerically the majority, yet influentially so by amazing odds. If those who are favorably disposed to him, could nevertheless see him imprisoned long enough to grow accustomed to his absence, and make them-

selves acquainted with his opponent, cash, such ease and freedom would they feel, that well nigh all of them at least who ask it, if not all of those who give it, would afterwards cry, away with him forever.

ORIGIN OF THIS THIEF.

We spent some time endeavoring to find out his birth or origin. It would be a satisfaction to know his father, the individual who first bought a thing, if that is not a contradiction and made no consideration for it at the time. Who first said, "You must take my face for this for the present, I have no change with me," or "charge it, if you please, sir, I will call in to-morrow and settle with you," or "I will pay you at the end of the month when I get my wages," or "I am going to deal with you regularly by book account, so put this against me for the first item." We say it would be a satisfaction to know just who he was, of what nationality, of what century, how old in years, which one of the expressions in significance, or what form of expression he employed. How the individual appeared who first saw his goods going and only promises to pay left. Further, we should be gratified in knowing whether the author of this custom ever returned to pay his account. Whether the next day, if that was the time specified, was not the next week, the next month, or the next year! Whether when he saw it recorded, he did not express himself as under the impression that it was smaller and looked at his creditor, as if he thought he had put the larger digit first, and the smaller one last! Whether when he paid

it he did not throw the money down like you throw a bone to a hungry dog that silently entreats it, a bone you would like to have a little longer yourself! Whether when he went out he did not forget his manners and act sullen, as if he had sustained an insult instead of giving considerable inconvenience! Whether the next time he wanted anything and had the money, he did not go somewhere else and buy it! We say we should like to know all this. It would be a sort of satisfaction and would show whether human nature had with its practice thus degenerated, or whether this meanness was connected with the custom from the start. If it has contributed to such unmanliness as we have portrayed, it would give us ground to detest it all the more.

We leave this, however, and proceed to demonstrate the matter we have affirmed. If the remarks just made seem trifling we justify them by the fact that no staid remarks could show credit to greater disadvantage and prepare your minds to think less favorably of it, to abandon it, if possible, which is the thing we most earnestly desire.

STEALS HOMES AND THEIR COMFORTS.

Homes and their comforts are part of the theft of credit. Costly homes with great comfort, as well as smaller ones with conveniences limited. "You cannot stand that" we once ventured to say to a merchant who transferring store accounts from day book to ledger, paused to say to us that he had "seven thousand dollars on his books." "You cannot stand it to sell at so small

a margin as you have told me you do, and carry as much non-interest yielding money, with the risk of final loss involved in that sum of debits." "Yes I can" he said, "though it would save me many duns and great annoyance if I had the money." With extreme sorrow we heard of his failure in the panic of 1873. "Is that the method in which you do business," concern for the welfare of a young man, once led us to inquire, as we pointed to a pass book in which he was charging quite an extensive sale of goods. "Yes," he answered "we have dealing with us by book account upwards of fifty workmen." "That is bad," we said shaking our head, half afraid of irritating him if we added more. But we had meddled sufficiently to excite him and he cried out—"how can they pay cash when they do not *get paid* until the end of the month." It was really none of our business and we made no further remark, but we saw that man sink, compelled to surrender his business, for want of the money charged in those fifty to sixty books when suddenly mills and factories closed, and the men "were not going to pay the last money they had, or were likely to have for some period of time, on an old account." You, who have made use of ears and eyes, can call to mind hundreds who failed from this cause. Merchants, traders, sold out by public officer, because unable to pay a certain indebtedness, and only unable because they had five, seven, ten, and twenty thousand dollars on their books not collectible when wanted. If they could have secured what was their own, when the

panic came, or the demand was made, they could have satisfied their creditors in full and had a balance left; but unable to do this they had to go down. In some cases not as greatly to be pitied as in others, because they trusted promiscuously and very willingly, and did not make effort in proper time to collect. In other cases more, because of a natural easiness and timorousness that rendered it impossible to say no, to applicants for trust. Still in all cases a pity, that in such way as this, the fruits of industry, economy, and sobriety, should be swallowed up.

CHARACTER.

With the theft of homes there is very frequently combined the theft of character. There was temporarily, in the two cases, of which we have made mention. Under a hope that they might save themselves when pressed, they borrowed on promissory note or due bill, small sums of money from near friends who cherished toward them unbounded confidence, who were in moderate circumstances and could do no better. But when the heavier creditors of these firms, scenting danger from afar, had by request, promise or threat, secured their claims and then forced payment it took everything, and everything did not satisfy them. These persons then who lost their loans branded as cheats the men, who borrowed of them. In harshest, cruelest ways abused them to their faces and to the public. And yet the merchants by whom they lost were strictly honest at heart and did not intentionally involve their friends in

their ruin. You know, however, how little allowance men who suffer the loss of money, usually make for motive and intent. Does it not seem hard that besides their homes, men should have reputation harmed, all from a practice that seems proper at least ?

Then in another way, property and character are hurt. Men not over conscientious finding they must fail because they trusted their goods, and so have nothing to pay those of whom they purchased, whose bills maturing will be pushed, sell off cheaply and rapidly, retain the money, or go into bankruptcy, or appoint assignees, or in some way, at the loss of creditors, save or help themselves ; but not without compromising their name and character. How much of this there has been in recent years. How often when not necessary. The temptation to small dealers to defraud those who have entrusted to them a considerable bill being more than they were willing to resist. Were credit less easily obtained, or were there no credit, fraud in this line at least would not be.

THIEVINGS DOUBLE.

But not only do those who give credit suffer loss in the respects named, but those who take it likewise. The person whose book account sums up a thousand dollars a year, might if he paid cash, get through the same length of time for nine hundred. And those whose expenses are more in the same proportion and be, all things considered, fully as comfortable. This statement is not made at random. The best political econo-

mists teach that the advantage of cash is at least ten per cent. We believe there are many cases where it would be thirty and fifty per cent. In the first place as a rule, people can purchase cheaper for cash than credit. In the second place buying for cash they will not buy many things they do buy dealing with a book or on time. Dealers are aware of this and accordingly when in a condition to wait on their money invite wealthy and reliable persons to open account with them. Sometimes they even turn from the cash and say, "Oh, I want your name on my book." There is not near the hesitation in purchasing a thing that strikes the sight, under such circumstances. Neither is there the ambition to save. A man who has a certain sum of money in his pocket to carry the expenses of a month, is struck with the idea that he may save a small part of it, if careful, "for a rainy day," or some noble purpose, and then watches expenses, and extravagances, luxuries, and so forth. In the other case there may be ambition to save out of wages, but it is not so controlling. Certain it is, that multitudes in the course of years, might by the one system save homes, that practicing the other, do not save them.

ROBS OF HONOR.

Besides the fact that homes are lost in this way, if may be said that honor is often lost. If men who deal by book are suddenly, from any cause, without employment, the temptation to retain the wages last gotten and not pay their debts, is frequently unmastered. The

man remains away from the store where he has been dealing, not unseldom secures work elsewhere, and moves away, leaving accounts uncanceled. How many men trusted for clothing, provisions and rent, have served creditors no better than this. Losing measurably by such conduct their honor and manhood, they have afterward on larger scale, defrauded. We believe that small trusts and credits have made numerous most consummate scamps. That it has resulted in the loss of all excellent reputation, in addition to the pecuniary advantage of cash.

In another way men have suffered loss through credit. Some who have asked it, by being compelled to pay indebtedness the second time. For some reason, unintentional we presume, no record of first payment having been made. Three different times in our life, before we adopted the cash principle, were we asked to repay an account and only saved by the precaution of a receipt. On the other hand those giving credit, suffer by men forgetting debts, or receiving the impression they have paid them, when they have not, becoming angry when requested to settle, then refusing until required by law, or doing it under protest, and with abuse, in either case withdrawing patronage.

But a man says "how am I to pay cash when I do not have it. "I am working by the month and am not paid until its expiration." A gentleman once screamed this in our ears, when arguing with us on the subject he became provoked at our position. It was a question he

did not want to be enlightened upon, and so we cooled his temper by replying—"starve for a month" and left him. It might seem to a man who holds this custom in esteem that there is no other way, but there is. We will explain by reference to an instance personally familiar.

HOW TO BUY.

A young gentleman entered the store of a leading grocery firm in one of the cities of this commonwealth. Making his way to one of the proprietors, he addressed him, to this effect—he had just been married—had spent all his funds on a wedding tour, and in arranging for housekeeping, and now would like to open an account with him for groceries and provisions in general. "I have regular employment at forty dollars a month and will pay you promptly when I receive my wages." The grocer heard him through. He was a man however who had made his money by not asking and not giving credit. "I will not open an account with you," he replied, "you can have no goods on time, I will tell you why." "If I accede to your request, you will buy many things in the course of the month not absolutely needed. Your account at the end of the month will in all probability equal the sum of your wages, rent for your house deducted. When you receive your money, you will not feel like paying to me every cent remaining after settlement of rent. You will be tempted to keep back five or ten dollars for emergency or convenience. The next month your account will be as great as the first

and you will then owe all your wages, having nothing for rent. The same temptation will then confront you, to reserve for pocket use five or ten dollars, and thus either the landlord will go without his due or I be minus twenty dollars, mine. So you will go on squandering what you retain of wages owing, increasing balance of indebtedness, until in a short time you will be back a whole month's wages to grocer, and an entire quarter's rent to landlord, and then, these refusing to trust you further will lose all. You will move into another house and commence trading with another firm. This you will do, if you are at all like many men I know, and I have no reason, begging your pardon, to presume you are not. No, sir, for your own sake, as well as for mine I will not trust you." "But," continued the man, "if you will receive it, I will give you counsel, that taken will cause you ere long to thank me for refusing the favor, as you regard it, just asked. Go to your nearest friend who has means, inform him of your situation, and ask of him a loan of five dollars until pay day. Determine that it shall do you good service. Make no unnecessary purchases. Live plainly. If five dollars does not see you through the month, borrow another five; if that is not sufficient, then five more, and make that do. At the end of the month, take your forty dollars. Pay your rent of ten dollars, your fifteen dollars loaned, and you will have fifteen dollars cash, for the second month. Compel that to answer. At the end of that month you will have thirty dollars, all

yours, no claim against you. Live on twenty, and save ten, or on twenty-five and save five. Go on in this way, saving every month out of your wages five, and ten dollars, and at the expiration of the year, you will have from sixty to an hundred and twenty dollars overplus, employment steady and health good. Avoid all bad habits. "Give strictest attention to your calling, and in that period you may be promoted. Then your means will justify a larger outlay." The advice was received in the spirit in which given and promptly acted upon, and years after when that mechanic stood promoted to a position of twice the revenue and lived most comfortably, but humbly to be sure, free of indebtedness, having money always at hand, respected in the community for integrity, he continued to thank the gentleman for his advice. "Every word has been worth gold to me." And all the more would he thank him when he saw others who started even with him, owing at various places, suspiciously regarded, the creatures of bad habits, getting goods on credit and using wages for tobacco, theatre, minstrelsy and the like. Now it would never do to infer that all men who deal by book, run back and become seriously involved, fail eventually to liquidate indebtedness. No. That impression the individual whose speech we have in effect repeated, did not mean to create, but with so many men who are without property or other revenue than what they earn by daily toil has this been the case, that not without cause do prudent, careful dealers refuse trust to such

persons. And fittingly may those unendowed with means, who would transact business on this principle, be warned against it. Ah, credit when I think to what perversion of means you have led ; to what temptations to dishonesty and fraud you have successfully exposed ; to what loss of reputation you have indirectly contributed ; to the woes manifold that have oozed from you, like sweat from the pores of a weak and sickly being, is it wonderful that I detest, hate and abhor you, and wish sincerely that in the sense I am speaking of, you had never been. Let any persons tempted to ask credit, take the advice we have related, as given by a most successful merchant, who rose from poverty to vast means and most influential position, and he will experience the same effect this young man whose case we have cited, did. "But I cannot borrow money," a man says, "and is not that the same as credit?" Possibly would be, but for the purpose for which you wish it. If you cannot borrow it, sell your time, explaining why, fast as you make it, until you have sold only what is absolutely necessary in order to sufficient means to carry you to regular pay day. You will find a way if you are ambitious and determined. And any who are encumbered with debt without means other than daily earnings, should get out of that condition, by at once reducing expenditures beneath receipts—using balance to accomplish this desideratum—and then stay out. Try it, and if you avoid the sink holes of society, places where they take money and give no return, you may make it

a grand success. God will help you, if you ask him, and you have no right to expect success without him. It will help reform your ways, if they need this ; help you seek your comfort more at home ; it will give you better temper, cheer and spirit and in every way make you feel yourself more a free man. It will help you think of a day of sickness or unemployment with more comfort. It will enable you sooner or later to make provision by insurance, if in no other way, for your family, and in this respect relieve you and them. As we reflect upon possibilities we cannot change our conviction that the want of homes, and the comforts of homes, in thousands and tens of thousands of cases, is wholly unnecessary.

A THIEF REMINDED OF.

This thing of eating before earning, wearing out before paying is in my opinion a reverse of the proper order. The result in countless instances reminds us of an anecdote we heard long years ago. A miserly farmer advertised for a hand to help him gather his harvest. The inducement offered was boarding and lodging. A lazy, doless fellow seeing the advertisement answered it in person. He came early in the morning, was warmly received and invited to breakfast. His appetite was voracious and the vituals provided were speedily consumed. He inquired the location of the grain fields and when told, suggested, that as it was a considerable distance off, they had better have dinner at once and then they would not need return until night. The

miserly man thinking that would be a saving to him, prepared the dinner hastily and they ate it; now said the stranger let us have what you propose to have for tea, and then there need nothing interrupt us until night. The bachelor farmer did not object to this, the thought occurring to him that much less would suffice for that meal, immediately after the other two had been partaken, than later in the day. So they shortly sat down to the third meal. "Now," said the farmer when they had finished, "we will go to work." "Ah," said the man, as he leaned back in his chair, stretched himself, and raised his feet to the edge of the table, "I am sorry to say it, but I never work after supper." So there are men, quite a number of them, who when they have consumed provisions, worn out clothing, enjoyed shelter of houses, do not feel like making return for it. Those of us who have tried both plans know that there is more comfort in paying for a thing while yet we have it, or even in advance, than after used and enjoyed.

A LESS DANGEROUS CREDIT.

We have now considered as far as we design the matter of store credit, or credit on a small scale between individuals. We have given our own opinion, and have done it with the sole motive of benefiting those who ask and those who take credit. There may be instances, where it would be difficult to put into operation the rules we have laid down, yet we cannot but believe, that these instances are extremely few, possibly less than one in an hundred of the host, who to the system adhere.

Against credit on a large scale—national, state, city, county or town credit—where money owing is well secured, where the evils noticed are in no measure likely to result, we have nothing to say. That doubtless is necessary to the general prosperity and advancement of the country. Neither against credit when allowed by individuals to purchasers of real estate, or by commercial houses to men of business, though many men who have asked, and men who have given credit of this twin character, purchased homes and heavily mortgaged them, or invoices of goods largely on time, have had occasion to wish—the one, that they had involved themselves to far less extent, or waited until greater means were possessed; the other, that they had been less liberal in the period of allowance.

TWO PARTICULARS IN WHICH ALL MEN ARE DEBTORS.

In two directions or respects, the freest of us so far as financial obligations are concerned, are debtors. In respect to fellow-men and God. The claims of these upon us, though we be ever discharging are still to be discharged. For every hour brings them new. There never comes a period even to the life that is best conducted, the fullest of fruits and religious activity, when nothing further can be expected of it, never while on earth it thrives or survives. Always in debt for sympathy, for kindness, for love, for forgiveness, for gentleness and helpfulness to fellow mortals, always, though these have gone forth as constant and full of the beams of the eternal sun. Upon these, from us, the poorest of

earth's creatures and the most degraded likewise, have claims, made indisputable and absolute by no less authority than that of the Creator himself. So there never comes a time when we are not indebted to God in the matter of gratitude, of love, of denial, of strong, patient, faithful service. So far short is the life keenest in its sensibilities to just dues, and mightiest in its efforts at their discharge, that frequently and fervently is the prayer, addressed by it—"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

This we think may be safely asserted. That they who most nearly approach the full measure of duty in the particulars mentioned, who endeavor to do morally right by fellow-men and by the Almighty, will ordinarily be freest of pecuniary indebtedness. They will exercise themselves more than others over claims of this sort, and strive more to accomplish their liquidation. By prayer and meditation and what through these is so apt to result, frugality and carefulness, they will find ways out of situations intricate, that to those who act differently will be unperceived and unpursued. Truly as respects other habits which we have described, so as respects this, religion helps amazingly. He who trusts and he who is trusted, might both wish and wisely, for their own sakes, as concerns the things of this life, as well as everlasting interests, that the religion of the cross abounded in all hearts.



XI.

USURY AND OPPRESSION.

Between the thieves of homes or the causes of poverty, which were made the subjects of preceeding chapters, and the thieves which are to constitute the subject of this final chapter, there obtains a difference to which, by way of introduction, we desire to refer. The former exist rather by permission than necessity, the latter rather by necessity than permission. The feelings accordingly awakened by contemplation of and reflection upon their work are different—we may say almost opposite. With the poverty wrought by the one we are apt to become impatient, especially if those who suffer from or under it, find fault with fellow beings, who steering clear of such thieves are better off; or with God, who for indigence and misery so resulting, is in no wise justly accusable. With that occasioned by the other we are inclined to be charitable, and not only this, but in every case where aversion was, or is impossible, sympathetic also. Surely it is a great pity, a matter deeply to be regretted and deplored, that persons who hold themselves aloof from all the thieves mentioned, keep them without their doors, follow a way of life antagonistic to them, should be deprived of means in-

herited and accumulated, or prevented the acquisition of means needed in order to the owning and furnishing of a home, or the possession at least of the comforts of a home, by thieves they are powerless to escape, shun or free themselves of. And yet in every age of the world have homes been lost, in every age persons kept from owning them, from even the acquirement of real home comfort, (good people, to the general tenor of whose life, no exception could be taken,) by this latter class of thieves we now mention—USURY AND OPPRESSION.

SENSE IN WHICH THE TERM USURY IS USED.

We do not use the term usury in the strictest sense in which it can be employed, or in the original scriptural sense, meaning by it the payment of a sum of money, or a quantity of any commodity, for use of a certain amount of money or commodity, but in the sense that is now almost universally accorded it, an amount of money or commodity, exorbitant, out of proper proportion to sum or product loaned, more than is justified by advantage of money advanced or borrowed. It may be said that a man has a right to take for the use of money all that he can get. Possibly he has, when he who borrows is under no sort of necessity to borrow, and when the use of money is fully worth to him all he agrees to pay. But when the borrowing is a necessity to meet some unexpected loss, to save a business, a house, a farm, a shop, and a heavy interest is gotten because exacted, or gotten because a lender would rather pay that, with the prospect of sav-

ing himself than sink at once, then we say it is not right—it is usury in its worst sense. And the state says it is not right, for it has enacted laws, expressing in its judgment the full interest value of money ordinarily, and forbidding on severe penalty the taking or collecting of more. It is lenient judgment that brands usury a thief of homes.

THE "MODUS OPERANDI."

Has not its practice so proven it? If we could marshal in line or lines all the men living who have lost homes, or the price of homes, through usurious practices, what a company we would have! If we could catalogue them what a book for size their names would make! How many men in the western country have lost their savings in this way—their home and farm on the wide public domain. By some circumstance, namely, a failure of the crops—disease among the cattle—ill health in family—unable to make ends meet they were compelled to borrow money. Able to do so only at fearful premium and excessive interest, they were forced finally to surrender all, or be sold out to pay back what was borrowed. We have even understood that eastern capitalists or monied men have gone west with money, or sent it there with a view to increasing their substance in this way. Loaning to men financially embarrassed a sum of money equivalent to half or third value of property, this at a premium or high rate of interest, perhaps both, securing the same by first mortgage, then interest defaulted, through misfortune or adversity of some kind,

pushing claims and taking whole property for it. If our information should be incorrect with reference to the west, which we do not believe, the fact is yet true as respects the east. We are personally acquainted with men who have greatly increased their estate in this way. Some who hold themselves, not only respectable but christian. Some who have given liberally to churches, colleges and charitable institutions. We know men and ah, how our hearts ached for them, who have been ruined pecuniarily by usurious money lenders, whole estates taken from them. Many persons are familiar with the *modus operandi*. A man in a critical pecuniary situation, very likely from no cause for which he is justly censurable, goes to another man in the community whom he believes to be in possession of a considerable quantity of ready means, makes known his trouble and entreats a loan. "I hardly think I can give it to you the man says," (looking on the ground and really having the air of one studying to oblige,) "money is hard to get, I do not think I can accommodate you." But the solicitor must have it, *must*. His good name is at stake, the continuance of his business—manufacturing, commercial, or agricultural—whichever or whatever it may be. He cannot tolerate the thought of having his paper protested, of a lawsuit, of a sheriff's notice upon his door and so he says to the man, "I will pay you twelve or fifteen per cent. for the use of it, or I will give you paper for two thousand dollars at six per cent. if you let me have sixteen or seventeen hundred dollars."

The man replies, "well I will see about it to-night or to-morrow, and if I can make arrangements, I will let you have it." The man sees about it, we mean about the kind of security he prefers, has it prepared and upon its proper signing and so forth, gives the money. A year passes. The borrower's condition has not materially improved. He is in the power of him who holds mortgage or judgment note, he must give further premium for its longer use, or a sale is ordered and property is thus extorted. If the consequences are less sad; if further premium is paid, and eventually by untiring industry, closest economy and shrewdest management there is safe out-come or deliverance, there has still been a theft of what approximates to the cost of, or of what is only balanced by the comforts of, a home. No manner of reasoning makes such a thing right. Tested at no shrine of judgment or justice does it stand. So does it feel its own guiltiness that it never holds up its head. No man who practices it wants it to be known. He enjoins secrecy in all transactions of this kind. We have personal knowledge of a man who in a heavy claim he had against a fellow man, gladly remitted a matter of between three and four thousand dollars, rather than be published to the public as a usurer and extortioner. One thing he deserved to have said of him—that his conscience was not dead, nor all his finer sensibilities blunted. No one driven to borrow at usurious rates, no matter how willing he seems to pay them, ever has but one honest opinion with regard to

them. We mean no man moving in ordinary life and engaged in a strictly honorable and legitimate business. And that opinion is, that it is wrong. However placid he may seem to the individual who accommodates him, however blandly and thankfully speak, in his heart he feels that he has not been dealt with as a neighbor or brother, has not had shown him the humanity a man owes to man in trouble, and to his wife and children or the walls of his bed-room stigmatizes the one guilty of the unlawful exaction as a "miser," "an extortioner," "an unprincipled man." If any one who entrusting upon such returns as we have specified his golden wares, thinks that he endears or embalms his name by the procedure, we are in a condition from what little we know, to assure him very positively that he is egregiously mistaken. If any one who under such circumstances obliges, and only in such way, looses, and then supposes he has the sympathy of any one conversant with his doings, we may say again, he is laboring under a delusion.

There are regularly organized associations, very popular of late years, that we have sometimes thought practiced usury and extortion. We allude to loan and building associations. So thought because we have known men who went into them with a thousand and fifteen hundred dollars clear, who bought out sufficient to provide with the aid of this a home, subsequently unable to keep up in their dues from no fault of their own, to lose all, through sale, forced to pay back money

loaned with the sum added as fines for delinquency of dues. So thought because we have heard poor men bitterly regretting that they had ever had anything to do with them; also because we have heard them commended to us as an excellent investment to those who pay in and do not buy out, by men who understand the art of making money. And yet our knowledge of their workings is so limited that we would not charge them as guilty of either usury or extortion. While the good men that are at the head of many of them, incline us to believe that evil suspicions with regard to them are not proper. We would say, however, to every man who desires to do strictly right, who does not wish to practice usury or in extortionary measures be partaker; to every man who does not want to be the victim of either of these thieves, go not into any measure without careful consideration; without knowing all that membership with an exercise of its privileges involves. We know how many men snap at what looks well on its face and afterward regret their haste, saying, "I might have known better." Know better in advance.

OPPRESSION—FIELD OF OPERATIONS.

We now turn to the second of this dual of thieves, oppression. The field of his operations is far more extensive than that of his confederate already noted. He is an old thief; the earliest records of history profane and scriptural making mention of him. Only to his pecuniary abstractions shall we allude. These are simply enormous. Adequate to the purchase out and

out of many homes, and to their adornment in many particulars, if the means taken by him were so expended. Look at the men and women engaged in manual labor in life's varied walks, and at the compensation received. In unnumbered cases how far short it is of what it ought to be ! While some in every branch of physical industry, in fact multitudes receive fair returns for services rendered, what numbers do not ! Among the men in the employ of the railways of the land, what a host whose toil and risk and exposure are not properly requited ! Among those who man our ships and boats and carry our commerce over the seas, and across our lakes, and up and down our navigable rivers, and along our thousand canals are many of whom the same thing may be said. And so it may be asserted of the mass of persons in the employ of the street railway companies of the cities of our land. Of many who work in our mines, our factories, our manufacturing establishments generally, in our shops and stores. Of women, widowed and poor, with large families dependent on them for support ; maiden women with aged parents to care and provide for ; married women with worthless husbands, who, caring only for drink and self-indulgence leave them to keep themselves and their little ones ; women abandoned by profligate husbands, but not until there is a family to feed, clothe and shelter ; of ten thousand such and more, in this country alone, who stitch from daylight to dark and from dark half way to daylight again, until from exhaustion and prostration, from

hunger and cold they die. In instances so numerous that sympathetic nature sickens in the contemplation, no just remuneration for work is made.

DOES NOT PAY.

Oppression in any form, under any leadership—single, double, triple, corporate, state or national—does not pay. Not in the long run in the particulars it is expected, not in any particular. Nothing pays that is contrary to the mind of God, or that proceeds in the face of his exhortation and threatening. And this does. “Rob not the poor because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate,” that is, where justice claims to sit and administer judgment. “He shall break in pieces the oppressor. He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches shall surely come to want. For the oppression of the poor will I arise, saith the Lord.” Look at the results of it as practiced by corporations and individuals. What has it, what does it induce! What invectives! What curses! What wastefulness on the part of scores who feel it! Cowardly to avenge themselves in any other way, doing their work at greatest expense to proprietors, using in the completion of a matter twice the material really necessary thereto, or performing in a given time only half the labor within their power! What thefts it has occasioned. . Millions upon millions of money are annually abstracted by men under the impression that their pay is disproportionate to their earnings; thus despite the greatest vigilance on the part of those who furnish employment. Not justified by such

idea, to be sure not. Not outside of their own opinion, and yet we venture to say, that numbers who steal because of this impression, would not steal, if they considered themselves fairly dealt with. What strikes effecting varied manufacturing interests, interfering with transportation of different kinds, involving heavy losses both to the men who engage therein and the men against whom directed, sometimes combining riot, has it prompted! What incendiary fires have been kindled by it! Building after building massive and costly, not unfrequently magnificent, have been consumed to ashes by flames lit by men maddened by the feeling of oppression. What murders has it planned and executed! Down into the mines boss after boss has descended to come up no more; one paymaster and another has left home not to return again. Here a proprietor and there has been foully dealt with—the explanation is, oppression. Nothing galls more, nor sits so uneasily upon any one. Nothing so transforms man to a furious monster. It may not produce as quickly as some other things but its productions usually are terrible in aspect. It arms with a strength that is superhuman. It overcomes all fears severest laws are calculated to instill. Death does not intimidate men smarting under it from dealing the injury that suggests itself to them upon those who oppress. “If I can have no liberty or comfort, no enjoyment despite all my efforts and pains you shall have none,” and the fatal blade or ball or potion is made to do its work. What is sad about this matter is that op-

pression is often, very often imagined, the men who employ, doing for their hands the utmost the safety and continuance of their business with a due regard to themselves will allow ; therefore it is a wise thing where there is no oppression in reality, for masters or owners to take time to persuade of this fact, and not refuse on the ground that it would be humbling so to do. Humility and manliness are never incompatible. Neither courtousness and real bravery. Of this the world has illustrious examples.

RESULTS OF NATIONAL OPPRESSION.

Not without tragic results has been national oppression. In its punishment the hand of God is seen as in individual or corporate punishment it is not visible. Pharaoh oppressed the Hebrew children, no one needs to be reminded at what cost eventually. Death in herd and stall and family, throughout his domains, together with the destruction of the entire Egyptian army, paid the penalty. Eglon, king of Moab, ruled inhumanly over Israel eighteen years until Ehud through pretense of a special message was admitted to a private interview with him in his summer parlor and there assassinated him. Mightily, for twenty years, Jabin and Sisera oppressed this same people, but it cost them their lives and their army. So reference might be made to the oppression of the Midianites when Gideon was raised up to deliver them, and other oppressions narrated in the sacred scriptures ; to oppressions of which profane history gives information, the results of which were

similar, death and desolation—the loss of men and means.

A FAMILIAR ILLUSTRATION.

We desire to refer to an oppression with which all of us are familiar. The oppression of the blacks in the southern of the United States. Well nigh a century of years the south practiced and the north countenanced it. It was fruitful on all sides. Giving to their slaves as the great majority of planters did little more than corn and bacon for diet, and coarsest and cheapest material for clothing, they appropriated to themselves, their wives, their sons, their daughters, the bulk of the earnings of these who wrought in bonds, which in the yearly aggregate were simply enormous, enabling them to every sort of purely pleasurable gratification, so enriching them as that they were able to pay, to northern merchants and manufacturers, in ready cash, the most exorbitant prices for goods and wares of every description made in their looms and foundries. So south and north fattened on the sweat and blood of Afric's sons and daughters. If the first were the perpetrators of the sin and crime, the second were the guilty partakers. But the end came as the end of all oppression comes. And what was it—the ultimatum of this great iniquity? Why every dollar, every dime with interest compounded, that was taken from the race to whom it rightfully belonged, from the day that the first slave rattled his chains on American soil, or wrought under lash of master amid the fields of cotton and rice in the sunny south,

until in the providence of God, the war of the rebellion in progress, the then president of the Republic, under a strong conviction that if judgment ever would cease and the nation's life be spared from perils present and in the future possible, oppression must terminate, wrote that grandest state paper of modern times, the proclamation of slave emancipation, and universal civil liberty reigned in all the land; every dollar, every dime we say, from the first mentioned period until the last has been required. This is what our national debt has meant and means. Besides this for the sin itself death reigned in an hundred thousand homes; desolation over millions of acres of fair fields and for long years comparative silence in the furnaces and iron mills of the nation, whose noise means prosperity and whose silence means adversity. Men may speak of this, or that, or the other, as being the cause of the conflict referred to, with the evils which it brought or entailed, but the one great cause, the cause primary and fundamental is explained by one word, oppression, and this is more manifest as the years go by. Ah, among the declarations history corroborates is this, "God is the avenger of the oppressed."

You may keep from another what by every law of right is his and for the present by so doing enhance your wealth, but the chances are that it will be demanded of you or your posterity to whom your possessions are bequeathed and in some form taken, by the great arbiter of events, the impartial adjuster of all

wrong. No, write in your creed business man, member of a firm or corporation with great riches and power, patriot legislating for state or nation, write it in your creed, it is a truth, there is nothing gained in any sense by oppression.

A RIGHT WAY OF DEALING AMONG MEN.

There is a right way of dealing among men ; one man with another, houses with their hands, corporations with their employees, states and kingdoms with their subjects ; and all other ways are wrong. This right way is told by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians. Hear it—"Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ ; not with eye service as men pleasers ; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart ; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men ; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters do the same things unto them forbearing threatening ; knowing that your master is also in heaven ; neither is there respect of persons with him." It does not answer for those at the head of these corporations to say we pay as much as we can afford ; nor yet for the heads of great firms or houses so to assert. Not as long at least as the stock of these corporations cannot be purchased at all, or only at a great premium, because of the large dividends it pays or gives sure prospect of paying ; not as long as proprietors, masters or employers pile wealth as they do, or spend it as extravagantly. Neither will it

do to say that the men agree or contract to labor at wages offered and would not need to do it if not so disposed. No. A right sort of man will take half what he should have, rather than take nothing, be idle, run ruinously in debt, or increase the inconvenience and discomfort of his family. We have little patience with a man, and find it difficult to cherish a good opinion of one who refuses to work at all, because he cannot get what he thinks he should receive. We incline to believe that most men of this stamp get about all they are worth. Neither have we any sympathy with strikers in the way strikes are commonly conducted, thinking as we do, that when a man is not satisfied with wages paid, he has the liberty of vacating his place, and improving upon it if possible, and that he should either remain, praying, and by hearty toil and calm argument entreating an increase of pay if inadequately compensated, or peacefully withdraw. While we think this; think that a man had better take what is tendered than be unemployed, and that taking that rather than nothing, he obligates himself to be faithful, and should not indulge abusive complaint; yet we feel that thus submissive, he is oppressed or deprived of what is honestly his, and that this fact is not altered by his concurrence from motives of policy. We know very well that many a toiling man and woman, labor as they will, save as they will, deny themselves as they will, never can at the compensation they receive own a home or the comforts of a home, be it ever so humble, unless this saving and denial are exercised be-

fore there is a family to sustain. So that homelessness is not only prevented by sin, but often where there are no habits of sin or waste or extravagance. Nor can we persuade ourselves that this is right. Men who invest their means in any public or private enterprise ought to have fair returns. Something should be allowed for risk, for danger of possible loss, in addition to legal interest. Fair compensation should be added for any labor of mind or muscle given by investors, owners, directors; but when this has been allowed, out of profits remaining, good wages to those who assist in working capital, should be paid. Though some businesses where really meagre wages are paid, might not permit an increase, there are many that would, as the rapidity with which those who control them grow rich attests. It would be well if where all is given that can justly and reasonably be given, pains were taken to convince men and women therein employed of the fact. It would increase their industry, carefulness, faithfulness in different particulars with a view to improving business, that better compensation could be rendered.

Men have been slow to put this way into operation. At the distance of eighteen hundred years from when given its practice is exceeding limited. And yet until it is adopted by the governing and serving classes, the men of means and power, and the men who develop and augment means, and give strength and durability to power, there will be no real harmony between them. Until then we will have labor agitations, socialistic and

communistic gatherings, strikes, riots, incendiarisms, despoilations of goods and property, thefts and murders. All these, much as we may deplore them. Not the denunciations which they call out from the more orderly and peaceably disposed; not the opposition with which they meet from press, from pulpit, from legislative hall, will terminate them. Neither the utmost vigilance on the part of the officers of the law, nor the severest sentence on the part of national commissions or state courts. You may imprison men for insubordination; you may dismiss them from employment; drive them from the homes they occupy; execute them or banish them to desolate sections of the globe; the blade will still sheathe and the ball still hide itself in the breast of the civilian oppressor, and poison and dynamite do deadly work in the palace, or at the feet of tyrannical king. Labor must respect capital, peasantry and lowly life do obeisance to royalty; but capital must likewise respect labor, and royalty, peasantry and lowly life. While the man of toil does all he can to promote and prosper the interest of the one who employs him—the governed, the welfare of the governing—the man of means and the governing must do what lies in their power to enhance the estate of those who serve them. “Do all for me you can and I will do all for you I can,” that is the greeting capital must send to labor, and palace to hovel. And when that is once done in truth and sincerity, when wealth reaches her hand to poverty, plenty to penury, freedom to serfdom, power to weak-

ness and says, "come up, come up, come to a better social atmosphere, come to increased advantages of body, mind and spirit, come nearer, to more intimate communions; we are blood of a common parentage. Get up out of your want and misery, I will help you stand—will assist you in the struggle of life. Where are your children, let me help them on," I say when this is once the voice of the rich to the poor, the exalted to the lowly, the strong to the weak, the tone of society in general will be vastly altered. Trades unions will be broken up; communism will die. The lives of bosses will be safe in the mines; manufacturers will go fearlessly among their men; kings walk unattended and safely the busiest streets. Among the humble and honest poor a voice of gratitude will sound through the land. Hundreds and thousands who as it is, frequently find themselves feeling as if they wanted to lay violent hands upon those over them, will then feel inclined to protect them even with their own lives against any violence that may threaten. Men will feel there is a chance to improve their situation, that life's struggle need not be in vain and morally this thought will result most happily. Of course there will always be men, that show them all the favor you can, assist them as much as you can, will never cease to cry against the rich. Worthless, doless fellows, too indolent to earn much and too extravagant and wasteful to save anything, envious to such an extent, that they would injure if they dared, fellowmen, who acting upon an entirely

different policy surpass them in means and position; but they would be left a feeble minority. And the support of the industrious poor and oppressed upon which they live and fatten, no longer given under such regime, they would die for very want of supplies. Oh, that the propriety, the benefit of mutual aid and obligation between capital and labor might be perceived and acted upon by controlling elements of each class.

FITNESS OF GIFTS.

We desire now to allude to a matter—small in one sense, but great in another—that vastly contributes when exercised towards the creation of kindly feelings between those who are in authority, and those in subjection, whether this authority be corporate or whether it be individual. And that is rewarding faithful industry beyond compensations stipulated, by occasional presentations. The power of a gift is simply wonderful. It draws the heart of recipient to donor. “He cares something for me, has some concern for my comfort, is not without sympathy for and good will towards me.” This is the persuasion it creates in the breast of him upon whom bestowed, while it subdues discontent, quiets murmurings, stimulates best efforts, and in other ways does good. Jacob of old understood its power, its winning, reconciling, friendly disposing influence, when sending his sons for a second time into Egypt for corn and desiring beside the corn, the return of his child Simeon, who on their previous visit on mere pretense, had been detained by their unrecognized brother, he

said to them, "carry the man a present." Give him "a present and God Almighty give you mercy before the man that he may send away your brother and Benjamin also," without a sight of whom he has declared he will not grant you provision. Many men after him have understood its power. Many men to-day to splendid advantage make presentations. And yet many men who should, make them not. There are masters, domestic mistresses, business managers, heads of firms, who never give those who toil for them and serve them a penny's worth so to say, beyond promised wages. Oh, ten thousand shames, there are those who refuse to pay full amount of earnings, swindle their workmen or workingwomen on a lie out of a portion or refuse to pay promptly and cheerfully. We cannot refrain from concluding that there is something mean about that man whoever he may be, that association whatever it may be, that competent or able to it, never rewards faithful service beyond agreed price.

In a condition of oppression nothing assists in bearing more than religion. It sustains the overtaxed, the overburdened man or woman. It makes unsavory and scanty meals, palatable and satisfactory. It makes shelter—though naturally rude—grateful, quiet and peaceful. It contents, as nothing else can, with such clothing and comforts otherwise, as can be had by best proper efforts. It saves many whose lives are full of weariness and want from acts of desperation and deeds of guilt and shame, to which by the thought of ease and

plenty, tempted. All this it does as may be witnessed here and there by visits to the pious poor. Furthermore it induces a temper, a disposition of spirit, that in a majority of cases is sure to make itself felt to advantage by or upon those who receive service. The diligence, the care, the strict integrity, the cheerfulness and courteousness which it inspires, will soften heart of master, and win the sympathy of observing neighbor, and help and favor will come that to those who remain without its attractions and deserts do not.

To my mind nothing more surely than religion will open a way out of oppression ; nothing as instrument more certainly lighten the burdens of those who toil in life's harder walks. If those who feel themselves oppressed, would only yield themselves to divine requirements, only deport themselves in accordance with its entreaties, only serve as it enjoins and in addition make use of importunity, fervent and persevering, God who moves upon the feelings of men, who can direct the emotions of the heart, would doubtless effect changes or cause them to be brought about in the interest of the toiling masses. Sooner than any socialistic gatherings and resolutions, than any communistic utterances, than any nihilistic plots and executions ; sooner than these, than any abusive cries or cruel determinations against men of wealth or prominence, of power or nobility, will a crying unto the Lord in sincerity and faith, combined with consistent christian behaviour right any social wrong that may exist.



CONCLUSION.

Every man should aim to acquire a property. In the case of some men, ambition of this kind may be vain, their years, their pursuits, their health and the demands made upon them being such as to render ownership of estate through personal exertion an impossible matter. In the case of millions more, however, it is a thing attainable. All that is needed being an earnest desire asserting itself in an avoidance of the habits and agencies that weaken and deplete and in a cultivation and practice of those that strengthen and increase. Multitudes are content to be tenants, not from necessity, but from choice or want of proper inclination to have it otherwise; subject to repeated removals, not unfrequently to exacting and cruel landlords, who are careless of and indifferent to their comfort. How little of the grand and magnanimous, the manly and considerate there must be about that individual whose aspirations reach no higher; whose desires include no material ownership or no gathering and saving of means sufficient for this. How small his concern for his family—the wife he solemnly covenanted to protect—the children for whose comfort, he is in duty bound to arrange and provide. What a strange idea of life, having out of it

thoughts of disability to earn anything, in time to come—of the feebleness of old age—of the need then of shelter and for health and happiness sake, shelter free of the anxiety of compulsory change and the ordinary dangers in change of residence involved. Moreover, the possibility of his own death, its more than even chance in a majority of cases with prolonged life, and the burden that under such providence would rest upon dependent ones of sheltering themselves; the peril of the alms house; of family dispersion; of abasement to menial servitude; to which they would be exposed. Surely we cannot say less than this, that he has indeed a narrow view of life, has not the thoughtfulness and concern that become a husband and father, who has no genuine aspiration to hold for himself and beloved a title clear to a local habitation or to control means that would to the purchase of such habitation be sufficient. It should be a prevalent ambition, as wide as the marriage relation, formed immediately upon its consummation "I shall own a property by the help of God or acquire and possess the means that at my pleasure will procure one."

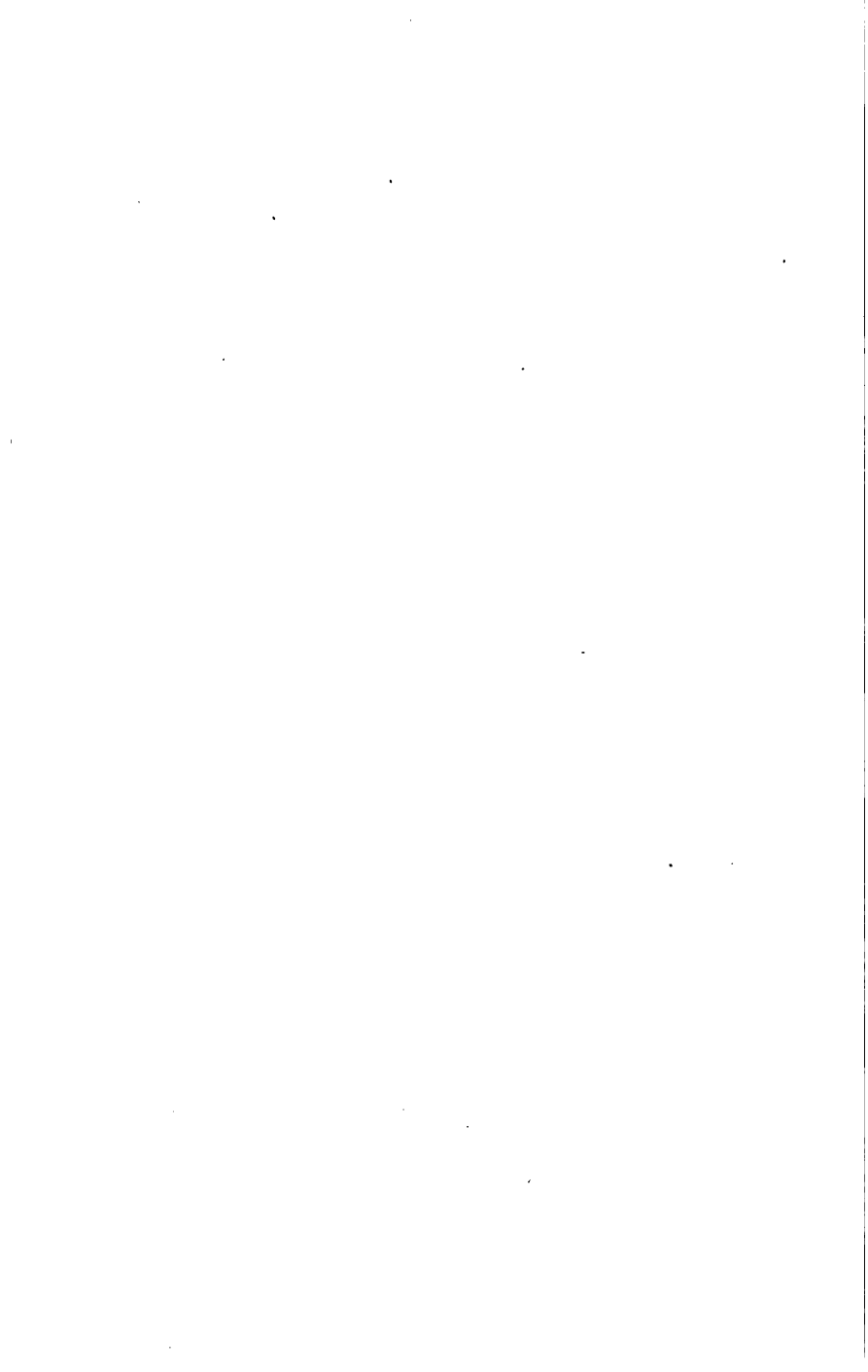
Ambition of this order, deep seated and persevering is nobly attended. Zeal is quickened. Labor in whatsoever channel directed, lightened. Cheerfulness of spirit is more easily maintained. The desire to please is augmented, that place may be retained and loss of situation not interfere with the speedy realization of the thing aimed at. So also a desire of efficiency and progress is awakened—a rising in ability and skill—that

there may be increase of wages and so earlier accomplishment of purpose. Strength likewise to resist every seducing and ruining agency—the ways of the world that consume and swallow means—comes with the organization and nurture of this ambition in the soul. We are prepared to say that if we could implant in men generally a real burning ambition of this kind, there would not be half the necessity of speaking against the habits in preceding chapters denounced. Fondness for and practice of them perishes in the heart where such ambition finds root and growth.

The effects of ownership are still more happy. A measure of satisfaction and contentment is associated with it. Interest in the neighborhood or community in which property is located is developed. Support of schools, churches, public improvements called out because advancement here adds value to property. Thus ownership becomes a stimulus to useful citizenship. It turns thought into new and safe channels. Ways to improve and beautify are devised, determined upon, and followed. It keeps off the street; away from idle companions; increases love of home; and thus acts as a safe gauard morally. It lifts ambition higher. I have gotten this, I can get more. Thus to continuance in sobriety—prudent living—diligence and fidelity which ever bring reward—there is strong incentive. Literally blessed are the effects of ownership, when the same has been attained not by gift or inheritance but by ones own inherent energies, under strong application.

But aim must not end with ownership. As already asserted a man may have a house all his own, no claim of any sort upon it and yet in the best sense not have a home. There are completest homes where sufficiency is as much as is enjoyed. The model home in Bethany we may safely presume had little more. Adequate food and clothing with cleanliness and neatness ; real kindness and politeness or grace and culture ; each member of the family exercising self denial and making exertion for the happiness of the others comprise the requisites to a real home. Thus many persons who may not be able to purchase a property may still have a home.

The better than an earthly home we should all make sure. No obstacle renders its possession impossible in any case. The conditions of clear title are within reach of youth and old age—of the unburdened and the oppressed—of the healthy and the sick—the strong and the weak—the chastened and the unsmitten by death. Faith which is “the gift of God,” “that cometh by hearing,” that manifests itself in a life of obedience to divine requirements and of conformity to divine example—in other words in holiness of heart and life, is the one thing necessary to occupancy of the prepared mansions—the home of the saints in the skies.









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